

Orberry's Edition.

A NEW WAY
TO PAY OLD DEBTS ;

A COMEDY ;

By Philip Massinger.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED WITH
THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE-STREET ;
AND C. CHAPPLE, 66, FALMALL.

1818.

**From the Press of W. Oxberry & Co.
8, White-hart-yard, Drury-lane.**

Remarks



This is certainly a very admirable play, and highly characteristic of the genius of its author, which was hard and forcible, and calculated rather to produce a strong impression than a pleasing one. There is considerable unity of design and a progressive interest in the fable, though the artifice by which the catastrophe is brought about, (the double assumption of the character of favoured lovers by Wellborn and Lovell,) is somewhat improbable and out of date ; and the moral is peculiarly striking, because its whole weight falls upon one who all along prides himself in setting every principle of justice and all fear of consequences at defiance.

The character of Sir Giles Overreach (the most prominent feature of the play, whether in the perusal, or as it is acted) interests us less by exciting our sympathy than our indignation. We hate him very heartily, and yet not enough ; for he has strong, robust points about him that repel the impertinence of censure, and he sometimes succeeds in making us stagger in our opinion of his conduct, by throwing off any idle doubts or scruples that might hang upon it in his own mind, " like dew-drops from the lion's mane." His steadiness of purpose scarcely stands in need of support from the common sanctions of morality, which he intrepidly breaks through, and he almost conquers our prejudices by the consistent and determined manner in which he braves them. Self-interest is his idol, and he makes no secret of his idolatry :—he is only a more devoted and unblushing worshipper at this shrine than other men. Self-will is the only rule of his conduct, to which he makes every other feeling bend : or rather, from the nature of his constitution, he has no sickly, sentimental obstacles to interrupt him in his headstrong career. He is a character of obdurate self-will, without fanciful notions or natural affections ; one who has no regard to the feelings of others, and who professes an equal disregard to their

opinions. He minds nothing, and takes the shortest and surest way to them. His understanding is clear-sighted, and his passions strong-nerved. Sir Giles is no flincher, and no hypocrite; and he gains almost as much by the hardihood with which he avows his impudent and sordid designs as others do by their caution in concealing them. He is the demon of selfishness personified; and carves out his way to the objects of his unprincipled avarice and ambition with an arm of steel, that strikes but does not feel the blow it inflicts. The character of calculating, systematic self-love, as the master-key to all his actions, is preserved with great truth of keeping and in the most trilling circumstances. Thus ruminating to himself, he says, "I'll walk, to get me an appetite: 'tis but a mile; and exercise will keep me from being put to sleep!"—Yet to show the absurdity and impossibility of a man's being governed by any such pretended exclusive regard to his own interest, this very Sir Giles, who laughs at conscience, and scorns opinion, who ridicules every thing as fantastical but wealth, solid, substantial wealth, and boasts of himself as having been the founder of his own fortune by his contempt for every other consideration, is ready to sacrifice the whole of his enormous possessions—to what?—to a title, a sound, to make his daughter "right honourable," the wife of a lord whose name he cannot repeat without loathing, and in the end becomes the dupe and falls a victim to that very opinion of the world which he despises!

The character of Sir Giles Overreach has been found fault with as unnatural; and it may, perhaps, in the present refinement of our manners, have become in a great measure obsolete. But we doubt whether even still, in remote and insulated parts of the country, sufficient traces of the same character of wilful selfishness, mistaking the inveteracy of its purposes for their rectitude, and boldly appealing to power as justifying the abuses of power, may not be found to warrant this an undoubted original—probably a fac-simile of some individual of the poet's actual acquaintance. In less advanced periods of society than that in which we live, if we except rank, which can neither be an object of common pursuit nor immediate attainment, money is the only acknowledged passport to respect. It is not merely valuable as a security from want,

but it is the only defence against the insolence of power. Avarice is sharpened by pride and necessity. There are then few of the arts, the amusements, and accomplishments that soften and sweeten life, that raise or refine it: the only way in which any one can be of service to himself or another is by his command over the gross commodities of life; and a man is worth just so much as he has. Where he who is not "lord of acres" is looked upon as a slave and a beggar, the soul becomes wedded to the soil by which its worth is measured, and takes root in it in proportion to its own strength and stubbornness of character.—The example of Wellborn may be cited in illustration of these remarks. The loss of his land makes all the difference between "young master Wellborn" and "rogue Wellborn;" and the treatment he meets with in this latter capacity is the best apology for the character of Sir Giles. Of the two it is better to be the oppressor than the oppressed.

Massinger, it is true, dealt generally in extreme characters, as well as in very repulsive ones. The passion is with him wound up to its height at first, and he never lets it down afterward. It does not gradually arise out of previous circumstances, nor is it modified by other passions. This gives an appearance of abruptness, violence, and extravagance to all his plays. All Shakspeare's characters act from mixed motives, and are made what they are by various circumstances. All Massinger's characters act from single motives, and become what they are, and remain so, by a pure effort of the will, in spite of circumstances. This last author endeavoured to embody an abstract principle; labours hard to bring out the same individual trait in its most exaggerated state; and the force of his impassioned characters arises for the most part, from the obstinacy with which they exclude every other feeling. Their vices look of a gigantic stature from their standing alone. Their actions seem extravagant, from their having always the same fixed aim—the same incorrigible purpose. The fault of Sir Giles Overreach, in this respect, is less in the excess to which he pushes a favourite propensity, than in the circumstance of its being unmixed with any other virtue or vice.

We may find the same simplicity of dramatic conception in the comic as in the tragic characters of this author. Justice Greedy has but one idea or subject in his head throughout. He is always

eating, or talking of eating. His belly is always in his mouth, and we know nothing of him but his appetite; he is as sharpset as travellers from off a journey. His land of promise touches on the borders of the wilderness: his thoughts are constantly in apprehension of feasting or famishing. A fat turkey floats before his imagination in royal state, and his hunger sees visions of chines of beef, venison pasties, and Norfolk dumplings, as if it were seized with a calenture. He is a very amusing personage; and in what relates to eating and drinking, as peremptory as Sir Giles himself.—Marrall is another instance of confined comic humour, whose ideas never wander beyond the ambition of being the implicit drudge of another's knavery or good fortune. He sticks to his stewardship, and resists the favour of a salute from a fine lady as not entered in his accounts. The humour of this character is less striking in the play than in Munden's personification of it. The other characters do not require any particular analysis. They are very insipid, good sort of people.

Philip Massinger, the author of this play, was born in 1584, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. He was entered a fellow-commoner of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, where he remained several years; but his inclination prompting him to the study of poetry and polite literature, in preference to logic and philosophy, he quitted the University without taking any degree; and coming to London, immediately employed himself in writing for the stage. He composed twenty-eight plays, seventeen of which are in print. One of these, the Duke of Milan, was revived at Drury-lane, two years ago.

A portrait of Mr. Kean as Sir Giles Overreach accompanies this edition. It is needless to add, that that admired actor, by his manner of acquitting himself in this part, has done the greatest honour to himself, and to the profession, of which he is an ornament.

Costume.

SIR GILES.

Brown velvet jacket and trunks, with orange satin puffs; brown velvet cloak lined with orange satin; the dress trimmed with gold-coloured silk lace and gilt buttons; brown silk hose, the same colour as the dress, with gold embroidered clocks; square-toed shoes and jewel buckles, with orange satin roses over them; a broad Brussels point lace vandyke with two tassels; a round-crown brown hat, with orange puffs and feathers of the same colour.

LORD LOVELL.

A scarlet jacket and trunks, trimmed with light blue satin, and yellow plated buttons; russet boots with red tops; scarlet mantle; black velvet hat and blue silk band, with black, white, and red feathers; a ruff; buff gloves with high tops.

WELLBORN.

First Dress. A brown ragged jacket and breeches; a pair of blue hose; russet boots, and a black hat. Second Dress. A buff kerseymere jacket and pantaloons, trimmed with green galloon, silk cord, plated buttons, and green vest, trimmed with buff; a buff hat, and white feathers; a ruff, russet boots; buff gloves, with high tops.

ALLWORTH.

A light mixture kerseymere jacket and trunks trimmed with pink galloon, narrow black ribbon and plated buttons; white silk pantaloons; pink satin vest, trimmed with light blue, and plated buttons; russet shoes; hat, kerseymere mixture, with white feathers; lace ruff, and buff gloves with high tops.

MARRALL.

Black cloth dress; black shoes, &c.

JUSTICE GREEDY.

A black kerseymere jacket; trunks and cloak trimmed with scarlet satin, galloon puffs, and black glass buttons; white square-toed shoes; black hat; gloves with high tops, and a vandyke.

LADY ALLWORTH.

First Dress. A black velvet train dress bordered with white satin and point-lace; long sleeves, slashed and trimmed to correspond; high ruff; stomacher of point; black velvet hat, white feathers, and tassels. Second Dress. White satin train dress, with long sleeves, richly embroidered with gold; robe of white and gold; high ruff; jewel stomacher and cross; white satin hat and feathers.

MARGARET.

White satin dress, the sleeves and front of the petticoat ornamented with jewels; a ruff, and white satin shoes.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	1817-18. <i>Covent-garden.</i>
<i>Lord Lovell</i>	Mr. Holland.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Sir Giles Overreach</i>	Mr. Kean.	Mr. Booth.
<i>Weilborn</i>	Mr. Stanley.	Mr. C. Kemble.
<i>Allworth</i>	Mr. Penley.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Willdo</i>	Mr. Carr.	Mr. Howell.
<i>Justice Greedy</i>	Mr. Oxberry.	Mr. Blanchard.
<i>Marrall</i>	Mr. Munden.	Mr. Terry.
<i>Vintner</i>	Mr. Evans.	Mr. Jefferies.
<i>Tailor</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. Williams.
<i>Tapwell</i>	Mr. Wewitzer.	Mr. Simmons.
<i>Order</i>	Mr. Hughes.	Mr. Bellamy.
<i>Furnace</i>	Mr. Smith.	Mr. Atkins.
<i>Amble</i>	Mr. Minton.	Mr. Treby.
<i>Watchall</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. King.
<i>Lady Allworth</i>	Mrs. Knight.	Mrs. Faucit.
<i>Margaret</i>	Mrs. Orger.	Miss S. Booth.
<i>Abigail</i> ..	Mrs. Chatterley.	Mrs. Coates.
<i>Tabitha</i>	Mrs. Scott.	Mrs. Watts.
<i>Froth</i> ...	Miss Tidswell.	Miss Leserve.

Musicians, Creditors, Servants, &c.

SCENE—*Nottinghamshire.*

The time this piece takes in representation is two hours and fifty-seven minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes—the second, forty—the third, thirty-five—the fourth, thirty-seven—the fifth, thirty-five.—The half-price commences, generally, at nine o'clock.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.		Left Hand.
S.E.		Second Entrance.
U.E.		Upper Entrance.
M.D.		Middle Door.
D.F.		Door in Flat.
R.H.D.		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.		Left Hand Door.

NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Village.*

Wellborn discovered, in tattered apparel, knocking at the Alehouse door, L.H.S.E. Tapwell and Froth come from the house.

Well. (R.H.) No credit? nor no liquor?

Tap. Not a suck, sir;
Nor the remainder of a single can,
Left by a drunken porter.

Froth. Not the dropping of the tap for your morn-
Tis verity, I assure you. [ing's draught, sir :

Well. Verity, you brache !* (*Crosses to centre.*)
'he devil turned precisiant†? Rogue, what am I?

Tap. Troth, durst I trust you with a looking-glass,
'o let you see your trim shape, you would quit me,
and take the name yourself.

Well. How? dog! (*Raising his cudgel.*)

Tap. Advance your Plymouth cloak,‡
here dwells, and within call, if it please your worship,
potent monarch, call'd the constable,
hat does command a citadel, call'd the stocks;
uch as with great dexterity will hale
our threadbare, tatter'd—

Well. Rascal! slave!

Froth. No rage, sir.

Tap. At his own peril! Do not put yourself
too much heat, there being no water near
to quench your thirst; and other drink, I take it,
ou must no more remember; not in a dream, sir.

Well. Why thou unthankful villain, dar'st thou talk
not thy house, and all thou hast, my gift? [thus!

* A female hound.

† A puritan.

‡ A staff.

Tap. I find it not in chalk; and Timothy Tapwell
Does keep no other register.

Well. Am not I he
Whose riots fed and cloth'd thee? Wert thou not
Born on my father's land, and proud to be
A drudge in his house?

Tap. What I was, sir, it skills not;
What you are is apparent: but, since you
Talk of father, in my hope it will torment you,
I'll briefly tell your story. Your dead father,
Old Sir John Wellborn,
My quondam master, was a man of worship;
Bore the whole sway of the shire, kept a great house,
Reliev'd the poor, and so forth; but he dying,
And his estate coming to you,
Late master Francis, but now forlorn Wellborn—

Well. Slave, stop! or I shall lose myself.

Froth. Very hardly;
You cannot out of your way.

Tap. You were then a lord of acres, the prime gallant,
And I your under butler.
O you'd merry time o't; hawks and hounds,
With choice of running horses: mistresses,
And other such extravagancies: which
Your uncle, Sir Giles Overreach, observing,
Resolving not to lose the opportunity,
On statutes, mortgages, and binding bonds,
Awhile supplied your folly, and, having got
Your land, then left you.

Well. Some curate hath penn'd this invective, mon-
And you have studied it. [grel,

Tap. I've not done yet;
Your land gone, and your credit not worth a token,*
You grew the common borrower; no man 'scap'd you;
Where† poor Tim Tapwell, with a little stock,
Some forty pounds or so, bought a small cottage;
Humbled myself to marriage with my Froth here;—

Well. Hear me, ungrateful hell-hound! Did not I

* An old coin, the value, it is supposed, about a farthing.

† *Where*] is here used for whereas, as it often is by our ancient writers.

Make purses for you ? Then you lick'd my boots,
 And thought your holiday cloak too coarse to clean 'em.
 'Twas I, that, when I heard thee swear, if ever
 Thou couldst arrive at forty pounds, thou wouldst
 Live like an emperor, 'twas I that gave it
 In ready gold. Deny this wretch !

Tap. I must, sir !

For, from the tavern to the taphouse, all,
 On forfeiture of their licences, stand bound
 Ne'er to remember who their best guests were,
 If they grew poor, like you.

Well. They're well rewarded,
 That beggar themselves to make such rascals rich.
 Thou viper, thankless viper !—
 But, since you're grown forgetful, I will help
 Your memory, and beat you into remembrance ;
 Not leave one bone unbroken. (*Beats him over to L.H.*)

Tap. O ! O ! O !

Froth. Help, help,—

Enter ALLWORTH, R.H.

Allw. Hold, for my sake, hold ; (*Catches Well's arm.*)
 Deny me Frank ? They are not worth your anger.

Well. For once, thou hast redeem'd them from
 this sceptre. (*Shaking his cudgel.*)

But let 'em vanish ;—

Nay, if you grumble, I revoke my pardon. (*Wellborn
 and Allworth talk apart.*)

Froth. This comes of your prating, husband.

Tap. Patience, Froth ;

There's law to cure our bruises.

[*Exeunt Tapwell and Froth into the alehouse, L.H.S.B.*]

Well. Sent to your mother ?

Allw. My lady, Frank, my patroness, my all !
 She's such a mourner for my father's death,
 And, in her love to him, so favours me,
 I cannot pay too much observance to her :
 There are few such stepdames.

Well. 'Tis a noble widow,

And keeps her reputation pure and clear.

But, 'pr'ythee, tell me,

Has she no suitors ?

Allw. E'en the best of the shire, Frank,
My lord excepted ; such as sue and send,
And send and sue again ; but to no purpose.
Their frequent visits have not gain'd her presence ;
Yet she's so far from sullenness and pride,
That, I dare undertake, you shall meet from her
A liberal entertainment.

Well. I doubt it not. Now, Allworth, listen to me
And mark my counsel : I am bound to give it.
Thy father was my friend ; and that affection
I bore to him, in right descends to thee ;
I will not have the least affront stick on thee,
If I with any danger can prevent it.

Allw. I thank your noble care : but, pray you, in what
Do I run the hazard ?

Well. Art thou not in love ?
Put it not off with wonder.

Allw. In love ?

Well. You think you walk in clouds, but are trans-
parent.

I've heard all, and the choice that you have made ;
And, with my finger, can point out the north star
By which the loadstone of your folly's guided ;
And to confirm this true, what think you of
Fair Margaret, the only child and heir
Of cormorant Overreach ? Dost blush and start,
To hear her only nam'd ? Blush at your want
Of wit and reason.

Allw. Howe'er you have discover'd my intents,
You know my aims are lawful ; and, if ever
The queen of flowers, the boast of spring, the rose,
Sprang from an envious briar, I may infer
There's such disparity in their conditions,
Between the goddess of my soul, the daughter,
And the base churl, her father.

Well. Grant this true,
As I believe it, canst thou ever hope

enjoy a quiet bed with her, whose father
in'd thy state?

Allw. And your's too.

Well. I confess it, Allworth.

Canst thou think, if self-love blind thee not,
at Sir Giles Overreach, who, to make her great
swelling titles, without touch of conscience,
will cut his neighbour's throat, and, I hope, his own
will e'er consent to make her thine? Give o'er, [too,
and think of some course suitable to thy rank,
and prosper in it.

Allw. You have well advis'd me.

But, in the mean time, you, that are so studious
of my affairs, wholly neglect your own.
Remember yourself, and in what plight you are.

Well. No matter, no matter. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Allw. Yes, 'tis much material:

You know my fortune, and my means; yet something
I can spare from myself, to help your wants. (*Offers*

Well. How's this? *him money.*)

Allw. Nay, be not angry.

Well. Money from thee?

From a boy? one that lives

At the devotion of a stepmother,

And the uncertain favour of a lord?

I'll eat my arms first. Howsoe'er blind Fortune

Hath spent the utmost of her malice on me,

Though I am rudely thrust out of an alehouse,

And thus accoutred,—know not where to eat,

Or drink, or sleep, but underneath this canopy,—

Although I thank thee, I disdain thy offer.

No—as I, in my madness, broke my state,—

Without th' assistance of another's brain,

In my right wits, I'll piece it; at the worst,

Die thus and be forgotten.

Allw. Fare thee well.

[*Exit Allworth, L.H. Wellborn, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in Lady Allworth's House.*

AMBLE, ORDER, FURNACE, and WATCHALL, *discovered.*

Ord. (*In the centre.*) Set all things right; or, as my name is Order,
And by this staff of office, that commands you,
This chain and double ruff, symbols of power,
Whoever misses in his function,
For one whole week makes forfeiture of his breakfast,
And privilege in the wine-cellar.

Wat. You are merry,
Good master Steward.

Fur. Let him; I'll be angry.

Amb. Why, fellow Furnace, 'tis not twelve o'clock
Nor dinner taken up; then, 'tis allow'd, [yet,
Cooks, by their places, may be choleric.

Fur. You think you've spoken wisely, goodman
My lady's go-before. [Amble,

Ord. Nay, nay, no wrangling.

Fur. Twit me with the authority of the kitchen!
At all hours, and at all places, I'll be angry;
And, thus provok'd, when I am at my prayers
I will be angry.

Amb. There was no hurt meant.

Fur. I'm friends with thee; and yet, I will be angry.

Wat. With whom?

Fur. No matter whom: yet, now I think on't,
I'm angry with my lady.

Amb. Heaven forbid, man!

Ord. What cause has she given thee?

Fur. Cause enough, master Steward,
I was entertain'd by her to please her palate.
And, till she forswore eating, I perform'd it.
Now, since our master, noble Allworth, died,
Although I crack my brains to find out tempting sauces,
When I am three parts roasted,
And the fourth part parboil'd, to prepare her viands,
he keeps her chamber, dines with a panada,
and my sweat never thought on.

Ord. But your art is seen in the dining-room.

Fur. By whom?

By such as pretend love to her; but come
To feed upon her. Yet, of all the harpies
That do devour her, I am out of charity
With none so much as the thin-gutted squire
That's stolen into commission.

Ord. Justice Greedy?

Fur. The same, the same. Meat's cast away upon
It never thrives. He holds this paradox; [him;
Who eats not well, can ne'er do justice well:
His stomach's as insatiate as the grave. (*A knocking
without.* L.H.)

Wat. One knocks. [*Exit Watchall,* L.H.]

Ord. Our late young master.

*Enter WATCHALL and ALLWORTH, L.H. Allworth
crosses to R.H. and salutes them alternately.*

Wat. Welcome, sir.

Fur. You're welcome:

If you've a stomach, a cold bake-meat's ready.

Ord. His father's picture in little.

Amh. We are all your servants.

Allw. At once my thanks to all.

This is yet some comfort. Is my lady stirring?

Ord. Her presence answers for us.

Enter Lady ALLWORTH, ABIGAIL, and TABITHA, R.H.

Lady. Sort those silks well.

I'll take the air alone:—

[*Exeunt Tabitha and Abigail,* R.H.]

And, as I gave directions, if this morning

I'm visited by any, entertain 'em

As heretofore: but say, in my excuse,

I'm indispos'd.

Ord. We shall, madam.

—*Lady.* Do, and leave me.

[*Exeunt Watchall, Furnace, Order, and
Amble,* L.H.]

Nay, stay you, Allworth.—Tell me, how is't with

Your noble master ?

Allw. Ever like himself ;
No scruple lessen'd in the full weight of honour.
He did command me,—pardon my presumption,—
As his unworthy deputy, to kiss
Your ladyship's fair hands.

Lady. I'm honour'd in
His favour to me. Does he hold his purpose
For the low countries ?

Allw. Constantly, good madam ;
But will, in person, first present his service.

Lady. And how approve you of his course ? you're
Like virgin parchment, capable of any [yet,
Inscription, vicious or honourable :
I will not force your will, but leave you free
To your own election.

Allw. Any form you please
I will put on : but,—might I make my choice,—
With humble emulation, I would follow
The path my lord marks to me.

Lady. 'Tis well answer'd ;
And I commend your spirit : your father, Allworth,
My ever-honour'd husband, some few hours
Before the will of heaven took him from me,
Did commend you, e'en by the dearest ties
Of perfect love between us, to my charge :
And, therefore, when I speak, you are bound to hear
With such respect, as if he liv'd in me.

Allw. I have found you,
Most honour'd madam, more than a mother to me ;
And, with my utmost strength of care and service,
Will labour that you may never repent
Your bounties shower'd upon me.

Lady. I much hope it.
These were your father's words :—If e'er my son
Follow the war, tell him, it is a school
Where all the principles tending to honour
Are taught, if truly follow'd : But for such
As repair thither, as a place in which
They do presume they may with licence practice

Their lawless riots, they shall never merit
 The noble name of soldiers.
 To obey their leaders, and shun mutinies :
 To bear with patience the winter's cold,
 And summer's scorching heat ;
 To dare boldly
 In a fair cause ; and, for their country's sake,
 To run upon the cannon's mouth undaunted ;
 These are the essential parts make up a soldier ;
 Not swearing, dice, or drinking.

Allw. There's no syllable
 You speak, but is to me an oracle.

Lady. To conclude :
 Beware ill company ; for, often, men
 Are like to those with whom they do converse ;
 And from one man I warn you, and that's Wellborn :
 Not, 'cause he's poor, that rather claims your pity :
 But that he's in his manners so deprav'd,
 And hath in vicious courses lost himself.
 'Tis true, your father lov'd him, while he was
 Worthy the loving ; but, if he had liv'd
 To've known him as he is, he had cast him off,
 As you must do. (*Noise without.*)
 Somebody comes. This way :
 Follow me to my chamber : you shall have gold
 To furnish you like my son, and still supplied
 As I hear from you.

Allw. I am still bound to you. [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

*Enter WATCHALL, ORDER, Sir GILES OVERREACH,
 MARRALL, GREEDY, FURNACE, and AMBLE, L.H.*

Gree. (L.H.) Not to be seen !

Sir G. (*On Greedy's R.H.*) Still cloister'd up ! Her
 reason,

I hope, assures her, though she make herself
 Close prisoner ever for her husband's loss,
 'Twill not recover him.

Ord. (*On Sir G.'s R.H.*) Sir, 'tis her will ;
 Which we, that are her servants, ought to serve,
 And not dispute : howe'er, you're nobly welcome ;

And, if you please to stay, that you may think so,
There came, not six days since, from Hull, a pipe
Of rich Canary, which shall spend itself
For my lady's honour.

Gree. Is it of the right race? (*Sir G. and Mar.*
converse apart.)

Ord. Yes, master Greedy.

Amb. How his mouth runs o'er!

Fur. (*On Greedy's L.H.*) I'll make it run and run.—
Save your good worship!

Gree. Honest master Cook, thy hand; again: how
I love thee!

Are the good dishes still in being? speak, boy.

Fur. If you've a mind to feed, there is a chine
Of beef well season'd.

Gree. Good.

Fur. A pheasant larded.

Gree. That I might now give thanks for't!

Fur. Besides, there came last night, from the forest
of Sherwood,

The fattest stag I ever cook'd.

Gree. A stag, man?

Fur. A stag, sir; part of it prepar'd for dinner,
And bak'd in puff-paste.

Gree. Puff-paste too! Sir Giles,
A ponderous chine of beef! a pheasant larded!
And red deer, too, Sir Giles, and bak'd in puff-paste!
All business set aside, let us give thanks here.

Sir G. (*Advancing.*) You know, we cannot.

Mar. (*On the R.H. of Sir G.*) Your worships are to
sit on a commission,

And, if you fail to come, you lose the cause.

Gree. Cause me no causes; I'll prove't, for such
a dinner,

We may put off a commission: you shall find it

Henrici decimo quarto.

Sir G. Fie, master Greedy!

Will you lose me a thousand pounds for a dinner?

No more, for shame! We must forget the belly,
When we think of profit.

Gree. Well, you shall o'er-rule me.

I could e'en cry now. Do you hear, master Cook ?
Send but a corner of that immortal pasty,
And I, in thankfulness, will, by your boy,
Send you—a brace of three-pences.

Fur. Will you be so prodigal ? (*Greedy and Furnace converse apart.*)

Sir G. (To Ord.) Remember me to your lady:

Enter WELLBORN, L.H.

Whom have we here ?

Well. You know me.

Sir G. I did once, but now I will not ;

Thou art no blood of mine. (*Crosses to L.H.*) Avaunt,
If ever thou presume to cross me more, [thou beggar !
I'll have thee cag'd and whipp'd. (*Exeunt Sir G. L.H.*)

Gree. I'll grant the warrant.

Think of pye-corner, Furnace ! (*Exeunt Greedy and Marrall, L.H. Marrall eyeing Wellborn contemptuously. Wellborn takes a chair, and sits down in the centre of the stage.*)

Wat. Will you out, sir ?

I wonder how you durst creep in.

Ord. This is rudeness,
And saucy impudence.

Amb. Cannot you stay
To be serv'd, among your fellows, from the basket,*
But you must press into the hall ?

Fur. 'Pr'ythee, vanish
Into some outhouse, though it be the pigsty ;
My scullion shall come to thee.

Well. This is rare :

Enter ALLWORTH, R.H.

O, here's Tom Allworth. Tom !

Allw. We must be strangers ;
Nor would I have you seen here, for a million.

Well. Better and better :—He contemns me too !
[*Exit Allworth, L.H.*]

* Alluding to the old custom of distributing broken bread and meat to the poor, at the porter's lodge.

Enter ABIGAIL and TABITHA, R.H. cross to L.H.

Abi. (Seeing *Wellborn*.) Mercy preserve my sight !
What thing is this ?

Tab. A wretched object, truly.
Let's hence, for heaven's sake, or I shall swoon.

Abi. I begin to faint already.

[*Exeunt Abigail and Tabitha, L.H.*]

Fur. Will you know your way, sir ?

Amb. Or shall we teach it you,
By the head and shoulders ?

Well. No ; I will not stir :

Do you mark ? I will not. (*Starts up.*) Let me see
the wretch

That dares attempt to force me. Why, you slaves,

Created only to make legs, and cringe ;

To carry in a dish, and shift a trencher ;

That have not souls only to hope a blessing

Beyond your master's leaving,—who advances ?

Who shews me the way ? (*Beats them.*)

All the servants. Help, fellows, help!—Within

Ord. Here comes my lady. [there!]

Enter Lady ALLWORTH, R.H.

Lady. How now ? What noise is this ?

Well. Madam, my designs
Bear me to you.

Lady. To me ?

Well. And, though I've met with
But ragged entertainment from your grooms here,
I hope from you to receive that noble usage,
As may become the true friend of your husband,
And then I shall forget these.

Lady. I'm amaz'd,
To see and hear this rudeness. Dar'st thou think;
Though sworn, that it can ever find belief
That I, who to the best men of this country
Denied my presence since my husband's death,
Can fall so low, as to exchange words with thee ?

Well. Scorn me not, good lady;
 But, as in form you are angelical,
 Imitate the heavenly natures, and vouchsafe
 At the least awhile to hear me. You will grant
 The blood that runs in this arm is as noble
 As that which fills your veins: your swelling titles,
 Your ample fortune, with your men's observance
 And women's flattery, are in you no virtues;
 Nor these rags, with my poverty, in me vices.
 You have a fair fame, and, I know, deserve it
 Yet, lady, I must say, in nothing more
 Than in the pious sorrow you have shewn
 For your late noble husband.

Ord. There he touch'd her. (*Aside.*)

Well. That husband, madam, was once in his fortune
 Almost as low as I; want, debts, and quarrels,
 Lay heavy on him: let it not be thought
 A boast in me, though I say I relieved him.
 'Twas I that gave him fashion; mine the sword
 That did on all occasions second his;
 I brought him on and off with honour, lady;
 And when in all men's judgments he was sunk,
 And in his own hopes not to be buoy'd up,
 I stepp'd unto him, took him by the hand,
 And set him upright.

Fur. Are we not base rogues,
 That could forget this? (*Aside to Servants.*)

Well. I confess you made him
 Master of your estate; nor could your friends,
 Tho' he brought no wealth with him, blame you for't;
 For he'd a shape, and to that shape a mind
 Made up of all parts, either great or noble;
 So winning a behaviour, not to be
 Resisted, madam.

Lady. 'Tis most true, he had.

Well. For his sake, then, in that I was his friend,
 Do not condemn me.

- *Lady.* For what's past excuse me:
 I will redeem it. (*Offers him her pocket-book.*)

Well. Madam, on no terms:

I will not beg nor borrow sixpence of you ;
 But be supplied elsewhere, or want thus ever.
 One only suit I make ; pray give me leave.—(*Lady
 Allworth signs to the Servants, who retire
 out of hearing.*)

I will not tire your patience with relation
 Of the bad arts my uncle Overreach
 Still forg'd, to strip me of my fair possessions ;
 Nor how he now shuts door upon my want.
 Would you but vouchsafe
 To your dear husband's friend,—as well you may,
 Your honour still let free,—but such feign'd grace,
 As might beget opinion in Sir Giles
 Of a true passion tow'rds me, you would see,
 In the mere thought to prey on me again,
 When all that's your's were mine, he'd turn my friend ;
 And, that no rub might stay my course to you,
 Quit all my owings, set me trimly forth,
 And furnish'd well with gold :—which I should use,
 I trust, to your no shame, lady ; but live
 Ever a grateful debtor to your gentleness.

Lady. What ! nothing else ? (*Offers her pocket-
 book again.*)

Well. Nothing, unless you please to charge your
 To throw away a little respect upon me. [servants

Lady. All you demand is yours. (*She beckons the
 Servants, who advance a little. L.H.*)

Respect this gentleman,
 As 'twere myself. Adieu, dear master Wellborn,—
 Pray let me see you with your oftenest means :
 I am ever bound to you. (*Going, Wellborn waiting on
 her.*)

Ord. (L.H. corner.) What means this, I trow ?

Fur. Mischief to us, if he has malice in him.

Well. Your honour's servant. (*Kisses her hand.*)

[*Exit Lady Allworth, R.H.*

All the Servants. (*Coming up to Wellborn with
 bows and cringes.*) Ah, sweet sir,—

Well. Nay, all's forgiven, all forgotten, friends :

And, for a lucky omen to my project,
Shake hands, and end all quarrels in the cellar.

• *All the Servants.* Agreed, agreed! Still merry
master Wellborn. [*Exeunt all the Serv. L.H.*

Well. Faith, a right worthy and a liberal lady,
Who can at once so kindly meet my purposes,
And brave the flouts of censure, to redeem
Her husband's friend!—When, by this honest plot,
The world believes she means to heal my wants
With her extensive wealth, each noisy creditor
Will be struck mute; and I, thus left at large
To practice on my uncle Overreach,
May work, perhaps, the measure to redeem
My mortgag'd fortune; which he stipp'd me of,
When headlong dissipation quell'd my reason.
The fancy pleases: if the plot succeed,
'Tis a New Way to Pay Old Debts, indeed. [*Exit L.H.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Skirts of Lady Allworth's Park.*

Enter SIR GILES and MARRALL, R.H.

Sir G. He's gone, I warrant thee; this commission
crush'd him.

Mar. Your worship has the way on't, and ne'er miss
To squeeze these unthrifths into air; and yet
The chap-fall'n justice did his part, returning,
For your advantage, the certificate,
Against his conscience and his knowledge too,
To the utter ruin
Of the poor farmer.

Sir G. 'Twas for these good ends
I made him a justice : he that bribes his belly,
Is certain to command his soul.

Mur. I wonder why, your worship having
The power to put this thin-gut in commission,
You are not in't yourself.

Sir G. Thou art a fool ;
In being out of office, I am out of danger ;
Where, if I were a justice, besides the trouble,
I might, or out of wilfulness, or error,
Run myself finely into a præmunire,
And so become a prey to the informer,
No, I'll have none on't : 'tis enough I keep
Greedy at my devotion : so he serve
My purposes, let him hang, or damn, I care not ;
Friendship is but a word. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Mur. You are all wisdom.

Sir G. I would be worldly wise ; for the other wisdom,
That does prescribe us a well-govern'd life,
And to do right to others as ourselves,
I value not an atom.

Mur. What course take you,
With your good patience, to hedge in the manor
Of your neighbour, Mr. Frugal ? As 'tis said,
He will not sell, nor borrow, nor exchange ;
And his land, lying in the midst of your many lordships,
Is a foul blemish.

Sir G. I have thought o't, Marrall ;
And it shait take. I must have all men, sellers,
And I the only purchaser.

Mur. 'Tis most fit, sir.

Sir G. I'll therefore buy some cottage near his manor ;
Which done, I'll make my men break ope' his fences,
Ride o'er his standing corn, and in the night
Set fire to his barns, or break his cattle's legs :
These trespasses draw on suits, and suits expenses,
Which I can spare, but will soon beggar him.
When I have harried him thus two or three year,
Though he sue *in forma pauperis*, in spite
Of all his thrift and care, he'll grow behind-hand.

Mar. The best I ever heard ! I could adore you.

Sir G. Then, with the favour of my man of law,
I will pretend some title : want will force him
To put it to arbitrement ; then, if he sell
For half the value, he shall have ready money,
And I possess his land.

Mar. Wellborn was apt to sell, and needed not
These fine arts, sir, to hook him in.

Sir G. Well thought on,
This varlet, Marrall, lives too long, to upbraid me
With my close cheat put upon him. Will nor cold
Nor hunger kill him ?

Mar. I know not what to think on't.
I've us'd all means ; and, the last night, I caus'd
His host the tapster turn him out of doors ;
And have been since with all your friends and tenants,
And, on the forfeit of your favour, charg'd them,
Though a crust of mouldy bread would keep him from
Yet they should not relieve him. [starving ;

Sir G. That was something, Marrall ; but thou must
And suddenly, Marrall. [go further,

Mar. Where and when you please, sir.

Sir G. I'd have thee seek him out, and, if thou canst,
Persuade him that 'tis better steal than beg :
Then, if I prove he has but robb'd a hen-roost,
Not all the world shall save him from the gallows.
Do any thing to work him to despair,
And 'tis thy master-piece.

Mar. I'll do my best, sir.

Sir G. I'm now on my main work, with the Lord
The gallant-minded, popular, Lord Lovell, [Lovell,
The minion of the people's love. I hear,
He's come into the country ; and my aims are,
To insinuate myself into his knowledge,
And then invite him to my house.

Mar. I have you ;
This points at my young mistress.

Sir G. She must part with
That humble title, and be honourable,

Right honourable, Marrall, my right honourable
 If all I have, or e'er shall get, will do it! [daughter ;
 I'll have her well-attended ; there are ladies
 Of errant knights decay'd, and brought so low,
 That, for cast clothes and meat, will gladly serve her.
 And 'tis my glory, tho' I come from the city,
 To have their issue, whom I have undone,
 To kneel to mine, as bond-slaves.

Mar. 'Tis fit state, sir.

Sir G. And therefore, I'll, not have a chambermaid
 That ties her shoes, or any meaner office,
 But such whose fathers were right worshipful.
 'Tis a rich man's pride ! there having ever been
 More than a feud, a strange antipathy,
 Between us and true gentry. (*Crosses to L. H.*)

Enter WELLBORN, R.H.

Mar. See, who's here, sir.

Sir G. Hence, monster ! prodigy !

Well. Call me what you will ;—

I am your nephew, sir, your sister's son.

Sir G. Avoid my sight ! thy breath's infectious,
 I shun thee as a leprosy, or the plague. [rogue !
 Come hither, Marrall.—This is the time to work him.

Mar. I warrant you, sir. [*Exit Sir Giles, L.H.*

Well. By this light, I think, he's mad.

Mar. Mad ! had you ta'en compassion on yourself,
 You long since had been mad.

Well. You've ta'en a course,
 Between you and my venerable uncle,
 To make me so.

Mar. The more pale-spirited you,
 That would not be instructed. I swear deeply,—

Well. By what ?

Mar. By my religion.

Well. Thy religion ?

The devil's creed !—But what would you have done ?

Mar. Before, like you, I had outliv'd my fortunes,
 A withe had serv'd my turn to hang myself.

I'm zealous in your cause : 'pray, hang yourself,
And presently, as you love your credit.

Well. I thank you.

Mar. Will you stay till you die in a ditch ?
Or, if you dare not do the feat yourself,
But that you'll put the state to charge and trouble,
Is there no purse to be cut ? house to be broken ?
Or market-woman with eggs that you may murder,
And so dispatch the business ?

Well. Here's variety, (*Crosses to L.H.*)
I must confess ; but I'll accept of none
Of all your gentle offers, I assure you.

Mar. If you like not hanging, drown yourself ; take
For your reputation. [some course

Well. 'Twill not do, dear tempter,
With all the rhetorick the fiend hath taught you.
I am as far as thou art from despair ;
Nay, I have confidence, which is more than hope,
To live and suddenly, better than ever.

Mar. Ha ! ha ! these castles, you build in the air,
Will not persuade me or to give or lend
A token to you.

Well. I'll be more kind to thee :
Come thou shalt dine with me.

Mar. With you !

Well. Nay more, dine gratis.

Mar. Under what hedge, I pray you ? or at whose
cost ?

Are they padders, or gypsies, that are your consorts ?

Well. Thou art incredulous ; but thou shalt dine,
Not alone at her house, but with a gallant lady ;
With me, and with a lady.

Mar. Lady ! what lady ?
With the lady of the lake, or queen of fairies ?
For, I know, it must be an enchanted dinner.

Well. With the lady Allworth, knave.

Mar. Nay, now there's hope
Thy brain is crack'd.

Well. Mark there with what respect
I am entertained.

Mar. With choice, no doubt, of dog-whips.
Why, dost thou ever hope to pass her porter?

Well. 'Tis not far off, go with me; trust thine own eyes.

Mar. Troth, in my hope, or my assurance rather,
To see thee curvet and mount like a dog in a blanket,
If ever thou presume to pass her threshold,
I will endure thy company.

Well. Come along then. [*Crosses, and Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*The Hall in Lady Allworth's House.*

*Enter WATCHALL, FURNACE, ORDER, AMBLE,
and ALLWORTH, R.H.*

Allw. (L.H.) Your courtesies o'erwhelm me: I much
grieve
To part with such true friends; and yet find comfort.
My attendance on my honourable lord,
Whose resolution holds to visit my lady,
Will speedily bring me back.—(*Wellborn and Marr-*
all, without, L.H. Wellborn knocks—Exit Watch-
all, L.H.)

Mar. Dar'st thou venture further?

Well. Yes, yes, and knock again.—(*Knocks.*)

Ord. 'Tis he; disperse.

Amb. Perform it bravely.

Fur. I know my cue, ne'er doubt me.

[*Exeunt, Furnace, L.H.S.E. Order, and Amble, R.H.*]

Enter WATCHALL, WELLBORN, and MARRALL, L.H.

Wat. Beast that I was, to make you stay! Most
You were long since expected. [welcome;

Well. Say so much
To my friend, I pray you.

Wat. For your sake, I do, sir. [*Exit. R.H.*]

Mar. For his sake!

Well. Mum; this is nothing.

Mar. More than ever
I'd have believ'd, tho' I had found it in my primer.

Allw. When I have given you reasons for my late harshness,
You'll pardon and excuse me ; for, believe me,
Though now I part abruptly, in my service
I will deserve it.

Mar. Service ! with a vengeance !

Well. I'm satisfied : farewell, Tom.

Allw. All joy stay with you ! [Exit, L.H.]

Enter AMBLE, R.H.

Amb. You're happily encounter'd ; I ne'er yet
Presented one so welcome as I know,
You will be to my lady.

Mar. This is some vision ;
Or, sure, these men are mad, to worship a dunghill ;
It cannot be a truth.

Well. Be still a pagan,
An unbelieving infidel ; be so, miscreant,
And meditate on blankets, and on dog-whips !

Enter FURNACE, L.H.S.E.

Fur. I'm glad you're come ; until, I know your plea-
I knew not how to serve up my lady's dinner. [sure,

Mar. His pleasure ! is it possible ?

Well. What's thy will ?

Fur. Marry, sir, I have
Some rails and quails, and my lady will'd me ask you,
What kind of sauces best affect your palate,
That I may use my utmost skill to please it.—(*Well-
born whispers Furnace up the stage.*)

Mar. The devil's enter'd this cook : sauce for his
palate,

That, on my knowledge,

Durst wish but cheese-parings and brown bread on

Well. That way I like them best. [Sundays !

Fur. It shall be done, sir.

[Exit Furnace, L.H.S.E.]

Well. What think you of the hedge we shall dine
Shall we feed gratis? [under?

Mar. I know not what to think;
'Pray you make me not mad.

Enter ORDER and WATCHALL, R.H.

Ord. This place becomes you not;
'Pray you, walk, sir, to the dining-room.

Well. I am well here,
'Till her ladyship quits her chamber.

Mar. Well here, say you?
'Tis a rare change! but yesterday, you thought
Yourself well in a barn, wrapp'd up in pease-straw.

Enter TABITHA and ABIGAIL, R.H.

Tab. O! you're much wish'd for, sir.

Abi. Last night, my lady
Dreamt of you; and her first command this morning,
Was to have notice, sir, of your arrival.

Wat. Sec, my lady.

[*Exit Order, R.H.*

Enter Lady ALLWORTH, R.H.

Lady. I come to meet you, and languish'd till I saw
This first kiss is for form; I allow a second [you—
To such a friend.

Mar. To such a friend! heaven bless me!

Well. I'm wholly your's; yet, madam, if you please
To grace this gentleman with a salute,—(*Puts Marr-*
all over to Lady Allworth, R.H.)

Mar. Salute me at his bidding! (*Murrall retreats*
towards the door, L.H.)

Well. I shall receive it
As a most high favour.

Lady. Your friends are ever welcome to me.

Well. (*Brings Mar. back.*) Run backward from
a lady! and such a lady!

Mar. To kiss her foot is, to poor me, a favour
I am unworthy of—(*Offers to kiss her foot.*)

Lady. Nay, 'pray you, rise ;
And, since you are so humble, I'll exalt you :
You shall dine with me to day at mine own table.

Mar. Your ladyship's table ! I'm not good enough
To sit at your steward's board.

Lady. Yor are too modest ;
I will not be denied.

Enter ORDER, R.H.

Ord. Dinner is ready for your ladyship.

Lady. Come, master Wellborn :—

(To Marrall who is retreating again.)

Nay keep us company.

Mar. I was ne'er so grac'd. *(Lady Allworth and Wellborn take Marrall by the hand—he bowing with the greatest servility—they retire through M.D.)*

Enter FURNACE, L.H.S.E.

Ord. So, we've play'd our parts, and are come off
But if I know the mystery, why my lady [well.
Consented to it, may I perish !

Fur. Would I had
The roasting of his heart that cheated him,
And forces the poor gentleman to these shifts !
By fire,—for cooks are Persians, and swear by it,
Of all the griping and extorting tyrants
I ever heard or read of, I ne'er met
A match to Sir Giles Overreach.

Wat. What will you take
To tell him so, fellow Furnace ?

Fur. Just as much
As my throat is worth ; for that would be the price on't.
To have a usurer that starves himself,
To grow rich, and then purchase, is too common :
But this Sir Giles feeds high ; keeps many servants ;
Rich in his habit ; vast in his expenses ;
Yet he, to admiration, still increases
In wealth and lordships.

Ord. He frights men out of their estates,
And breaks through all law-nets, made to curb ill men,
As they were cobwebs. No man dares reprove him.
Such a spirit to dare, and power to do, were never
Lodg'd so unluckily.

Enter AMBLE, M. D.

Amb. Ha! ha! I shall burst.

Ord. Contain thyself, man.

Fur. Or make us partakers
Of your sudden mirth.

Amb. Ha! ha! my lady has got
Such a guest at her table!—this term-driver, Marrall,
This snip of an attorney!

Wat. What of him, man?

Amb. The knave feeds so slovenly!

Fur. Is this all?

Amb. My lady
Drank to him for fashion's sake, or to please master
As I live, he rises and takes up a dish [Wellborn;
In which there were some remnants of a boil'd capon,
And pledges her in white broth!

Fur. Nay, 'tis like
The rest of his tribe.

Amb. And when I brought him wine,
He leaves his chair, and, after a leg or two,
Most humbly thanks my worship—my worship!

All the Servants. Ha! ha! ha!—

Ord. Risen already?

Fur. My lady frowns.

Amb. I shall be chid. [Exit Furnace, L. H. S. E.]

*Enter Lady ALLWORTH, WELLBORN, and MARRALL,
M. D.*

Lady. You attend us well!
Let me have no more of this; I observ'd your leering:
Sir, I will have you know, whom I think worthy
To sit at my table,
When I am present, is not your companion.

Ord. (*Aside.*) Nay, she'll preserve what's due to her.

Lady. (*To Wellborn.*) You are master
Of your own will. I know so much of manners,
As not to inquire your purposes; in a word,
(*Crosses to R. H. Wellborn following her.*)
To me you are ever welcome, as to a house
That is your own.

Well. Mark that. (*To Marrall.*)

Mar. (L.H.) With reverence, sir,
And it like your worship.

Well. Trouble yourself no further,
Dear madam, my heart's full of zeal and service;
However in my language I am sparing.
Come, master Marrall.

Mar. I attend your worship.

[*Exeunt Watchall, Wellborn, and Marrall, L.H.*]

Lady. (*To the servants.*) I see in your looks you
are sorry, and you know me
An easy mistress: be merry; I have forgot all.
Order and Amble, come with me; I must give you
Further directions.

Ord. What you please.

Amb. We are ready. [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE III.—*The Open Country.*

Enter WELLBORN and MARRALL, L.H.S.E.

Well. I think I'm in a good way.

Mar. Good, sir! The best way;
The certain best way,

Well. Is't for your ease
You keep your hat off.

Mar. Ease, and it like your worship!
I hope Jack Marrall shall not live so long,
To prove himself such an unmannerly beast,
Though it hail hazel-nuts, as to be covered
When your worship's present.

Well. (*Aside.*) Is not this a true rogue,
That, out of mere hope of a future coz'nage,
Can turn thus suddenly? 'tis rank already.

Mar. I know your worship's wise and needs no
Yet if, in my desire to do you service, [counsel;
I humbly offer my advice, (but still
Under correction,) I hope I shall not
Incur your high displeasure.

Well. No; speak freely.

Mar. Then, in my judgment, sir, my simple judge-
ment,
(Still with your worship's favour,) I could wish you
A better habit; for this cannot be
But much distasteful to the noble lady
That loves you:

I have twenty pounds here,
Which out of my true love, I'll presently
Lay down at your worship's feet; 'twill serve to buy you
A riding suit.

Well. But where's the horse?

Mar. My gelding
Is at your service: nay, you shall ride me,
Before your worship shall be put to the trouble
To walk afoot. Alas! when you are lord
Of this lady's manor, (as I know you will be,)
You may with the lease of glebe land, call'd Knave's
A place I would manure, requite your vassal. [Acre,

Well. I thank thy love; but will make no use of it.
Did I want clothes, think'st thou I could not have 'em
For one word to my lady?

Mar. As I know not that—

Well. Come, I'll tell thee a secret, and so leave thee.
I'll not give her the advantage, though she be
A gallant-minded lady, after we're married
To hit me in the teeth, and say, she was forc'd
To buy my wedding clothes.—

No, I'll be furnish'd something like myself,
And so farewell.—For thy suit touching Knave's Acre,
When it is mine, 'tis thine. [Exit Wellborn, R. H.

Mar. I thank your worship.

How was I cozen'd in the calculation
 Of this man's fortune ! My master cozen'd too,
 Whose pupil I am in the art of undoing men ;
 For that is our profession. Well, well, master Wellborn ;
 You are of a sweet nature, and fit again to be cheated ;
 Which, if the fates please, when you are possess'd
 Of the land and lady, you *sans* question shall be.
 I'll presently think of the means.

(*Walks by, musing, R.H.*)

Enter Sir GILES, L. H. (Speaking as he enters.)

Sir G. Sirrah, take my horse,
 I'll walk, to get me an appetite ; 'tis but a mile ;
 And exercise will keep me from being pursy.
 Ha ! Marrall !—Is he conjuring ? Perhaps
 The knave has wrought the prodigal to do
 Some outrage on himself, and now he feels
 Compunction in his conscience for't : no matter,
 So it be done.—Marrall ! Marrall !

Mar. Sir ?

Sir G. How succeed we
 In our plot on Wellborn ?

Mar. Never better, sir.

Sir G. Has he hang'd or drown'd himself ?

Mar. No, sir, he lives ;
 Lives, once more to be made a prey to you,
 A greater prey than ever.

Sir G. Art thou in thy wits ?
 If thou art, reveal this miracle, and briefly.

Mar. A lady, sir, is fallen in love with him.

Sir G. With him ! What lady ?

Mar. The rich Lady Allworth.

Sir G. Thou dolt ! how dar'st thou speak this ?

Mar. I speak truth,
 And I do so but once a year, unless
 It be to you, sir. We din'd with her ladyship,
 I thank his worship.

Sir G. His worship !

Mar. As I live, sir,

I din'd with him, at the great lady's table,
Simple as I stand here; and saw when she kiss'd him,
And would, at his request, have kiss'd me too.

Sir G. Why thou rascal!

To tell me these impossibilities.

Dine at her table! and kiss him! or thee!

Impudent varlet, have not I myself,

Ten times attempted, since her husband's death,

In vain to see her, though I came—a suitor?

And yet your good solicitorship, and rogue Wellborn,
Were brought into her presence, feasted with her!—

But that I know thee a dog that cannot blush,

This most incredible lie would call up one

On thy buttermilk checks.

Mar. Shall I not trust my eyes, sir.

Or taste? I feel her good cheer in my belly.

Sir G. You shall feel me, if you give not over,
sirrah:

Recover your brains again, and be no more gull'd

With a beggar's plot, assisted by the aids

Of serving-men and chambermaids;

Or I'll quit you

From my employments.

Mar. Will you credit this yet?

On my confidence of their marriage, I offer'd Well-
born—

(*Aside.*) I'd give a crown now I durst say his worship,
My nag, and twenty pounds.

Sir G. Did you so, idiot? (*Strikes him down.*)

Was this the way to work him to despair,

Or rather to cross me? (*Beats him.*)

Mar. Will your worship kill me?

Sir G. No, no; but drive the lying spirit out of you.

Mar. He's gone.

Sir G. I've done then. Now, forgetting,

Your late imaginary feast and lady,

Know my Lord Lovell dines with me to-morrow:

Be careful nought be wanting to receive him:

And bid my daughter's women trim her up,

Though they paint her, so she catch the lord, I'll
thank 'em.—

There's a piece, for my late blows. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Mar. (*Aside.*) I may yet cry quittance ;

There may be a time—

Sir G. Do you grumble ?

Mar. No, sir.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Skirts of Lady Allworth's Park.*

Enter LOVELL and ALLWORTH, L.H.

Lov. (*Speaking as he enters.*) Drive the coach
round the hill : something in private
I must impart to Allworth.

Allw. O, my lord,
What sacrifice of rev'rence, duty, watching,
Although I could put off the use of sleep,
And ever wait on your commands to serve 'em ;
What dangers, though in ne'er so horrid shapes,
Nay death itself, though I should run to meet it,
Can I, and with a thankful willingness, suffer ;
But still the retribution will fall short
Of your bounties shower'd upon me !

Lov. Nay, good youth,
Till what I purpose be put into act,
Do not o'erprize it. Since you've trusted me
With your soul's nearest, nay, her dearest secret,
Rest confident, 'tis in a cabinet lock'd
Treachery shall never open. I have found you
More zealous in your love and service to me,
Than I have been in my rewards.

Allw. Still great ones,

Above my merit.

You have been

More like a father to me than a master :

'Pray you, pardon the comparison.

Lov. I allow it ;

And to give you assurance I am pleas'd in't,

My carriage and demeanour to your mistress,

Fair Margaret, shall truly witness for me,

I can command my passions.

Allw. 'Tis a conquest

Few men can boast of, when they are tempted.—Oh !

Lov. Why do you sigh ? Can you be doubtful of me ?

By that fair name I in the wars have purchas'd,

And all my actions, hitherto untainted,

I will not be more true to mine own honour,

Than to thee, Allworth !

Allw. Were you to encounter with a single foe,

The victory were certain : but to stand

The charge of two such potent enemies,

At once assaulting you, as wealth and beauty,

And those too seconded with power, is odds

Too great for Hercules.

Lov. Speak your doubts and fears,

Since you will nourish'em, in plainer language,

That I may understand'em.

Allw. My much-lov'd lord, were Margaret only fair,

You might command your passion ;

But, when the well-tun'd accents of her tongue

Make music to you, and with numerous sounds

Assault your hearing,

Hippolytus himself would leave Diana,

To follow such a Venus.

Lov. Love hath made you

Poetical, Allworth.

Allw. Grant all these beat off,

(Which if it be in man to do, you'll do it,)

Mammon, in Sir Giles Overreach, steps in

With heaps of ill-got gold, and as much land

As would tire

A falcon's wings, in one dash to fly over.

I here release your trust :

'Tis happiness enough for me, to serve you,
And sometimes, with chaste eyes, to look upon her

Lov. Why, shall I swear ?

Allw. O, by no means, my lord !

Lov. Suspend

Your judgement till the trial. How far is't
To Overreach' house ?

Allw. At the most, some half hour's riding ;
You'll soon be there.

Lov. And you the sooner freed
From your jealous fears.

Allw. Oh, that I durst but hope it !

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE II.—*The Hall in Sir Giles's House.*

Enter SIR GILES, GREEDY, and MARRALL, L.H.U.E.

(*Sir Giles in the centre, Greedy, R.H. Marrall, L.H.*)

Sir G. Spare for no cost ; let my dressers crack with
Of curious viands. [the weight

Gree. Store indeed's no sore, sir.

Sir G. That proverb fits your stomach, master
Greedy.

Gree. It does indeed, Sir Giles : I do not like to see
a table ill-spread, poor, meagre, just sprinkled o'er
with salads, slic'd beef, giblets, and pig's pettitoes.
But the substantials—O, Sir Giles, the substantials !
The state of a fat turkey now ! the decorum, the gran-
deur, he marches in with ! O, I declare, I do much
honour a chine of beef ! O, I do reverence a loin of
veal !

- *Sir G.* And let no plate be seen, but what's pure gold,
Or such whose workmanship exceeds the matter
That it is made of : let my choicest linen
Perfume the room ; and, when we wash, the water,

With precious powders mix'd, so please my lord,
That he may with envy wish to bathe so ever.

Mar. 'Twill be very chargeable.

Sir G. Avaunt, you drudge!

Now all my labour'd ends are at the stake,
Is't a time to think of thrift? Call in my daughter.

Call in my daughter. *[Exit Marrall, L.H.]*

And, master justice, since you love choice dishes,
And plenty of 'em.

Gree. As I do indeed, sir,
Almost as much as to give thanks for 'em.

Sir G. I do confer that providence, with my power
Of absolute command to have abundance,
'To your best care.

Gree. I'll punctually discharge it,
And give the best directions.—(*Sir Giles retires up*
Now am I, *[the stage.]*

In mine own conceit, a monarch; at least,
Arch-president o'the buil'd, the roast, the bak'd:—
I'd not change my throne for the Great Mogul's;
For which I will eat often; and give thanks,

'When my belly's braced up like a drum; and that's
pure justice. *[Exit Greedy, R.H.]*

Sir G. (*Advancing.*) It must be so: should the
foolish girl prove modest,
She may spoil all: she had it not from me,
But from her mother: I was ever forward,
As she must be; and therefore I'll prepare her.

Enter MARRALL, followed by MARGARET, and
Attendants, L.H.

Alone, Margaret,—
Alone,—and let your women wait without.

[Exit Women and Mar. L.H.]

(*Marg.* Your pleasure, sir?

Sir G. Ha! this is a neat dressing! (*Walks round her.*)

These orient pearls and diamonds well plac'd too!

The gown affects me not, it should have been
Embroider'd o'er and o'er with flowers of gold;
But these rich jewels and quaint fashion help it.

How like you your new woman,
The Lady Downfallen?

Marg. Well, for a companion ;
Not as a servant.

Sir G. Is she humble, Meg,
And careful to, her ladyship forgotten?

Marg. I pity her fortune.

Sir G. Pity her! Trample on her.
I took her up in an old tamin* gown,
E'en starv'd for very want of food, to serve thee,
And if I understand she but repines
'To do the any duty, though ne'er so servile,
I'll pack her to her knight, where I have lodg'd him,
Into the counter' and there let 'em howl together.

Marg. You know your own ways, but for me, I
blush
When I command her that was once attended
With persons not inferior to myself
In birth.

Sir G. In birth! Why, art thou not my daughter,
The blest child of my industry and wealth?
Part with these humble thoughts, and apt thyself
To the noble state I labour to advance thee;
Or, by my hope to see thee honourable,
I will adopt a stranger to my fortunes,
And throw thee from my care: Do not provoke me.

Marg. I will not, sir; mould me which way you
please.

*Enter GREEDY, R.H. with a napkin round his neck,
and a rolling-pin in his hand.*

Gree. Sir Giles, Sir Giles,—

Sir G. How! interrupted?

Gree. 'Tis matter of importance.
The cook, sir, is self-will'd, and will not learn
From my experience. There's a fawn brought in, sir,
And, for my life, I cannot make him roast it

* A coarse linseywolsey stuff, geucrally called taminy, or
tammy.

With a Norfolk dumpling in the belly of it :
 And, sir, we wise men know, that without the dumpling!
 'Tis not worth three pence.

Sir G. Would it were whole in thy belly,
 To stuff it out ! Cook it any way : Pr'ythee, leave me.

Gree. Without order for the dumpling ?

Sir G. Let it be dumped
 Which way thou wilt ; or tell him, I will scald him
 In his own caldron.

Gree. I had lost my stomach
 Had I lost my dumpling. [*Exit Greedy, R.H.*]

Sir G. But to our business, Meg :—You've heard

Meg. I have, sir. [who dines here ?]

Sir G. 'Tis an honourable man ;
 A lord, Meg, and commands a regiment
 Of soldiers ; and, what's rare, is one himself,
 A bold and understanding one ; and to be
 A lord, and a good leader, in one volume,
 Is granted unto few, but such as rise up
 The kingdom's glory.

Re-enter GREEDY, R.H. with a toast and fork.

Gree. I'll resign my office,
 If I be not better obey'd.

Sir G. 'Slight, art thou frantic ?

Gree. Frantic ! 'twould make me frantic, and stark
 mad,

Were I not a justice of peace and quorum too,
 Which this rebellious cook cares not a straw for.
 There are a dozen of woodcocks.—

He has found out

A new device for sauce, and will not dish 'em
 With toasts and butter.

Sir G. (*Crosses to R.H. behind.*) Cook !—rogue, obey
 him !

I've given the word : pray, now remove yourself
 To a collar of brawn, and trouble me no further.

Gree. I will and meditate what to eat at dinner.

[*Exit Greedy, R.H.*]

Sir G. And as I said, Meg, when this gull dis-
This honourable lord, this colonel, [turb'd us,
I would have thy husband.

Marg. There's too much disparity
Between his quality and mine, to hope it.

Sir G. I more than hope, and doubt not to effect it ;
Be thou no enemy to thyself : my wealth
Shall weigh his titles down, and make you equals.
Now for the means to assure him thine, observe me :
Remember, he's a courtier, and a soldier,
And not to be trifled with ; and therefore, when
He comes to woo you, see you do not coy it :
This mincing modesty hath spoil'd many a match
By a first refusal, in vain after hop'd for.

Marg. You'll have me, sir, preserve the distance
Confines a virgin ? [that

Sir G. Virgin me no virgins !
I'll have you lose that name, or you lose me ;
I'll have you private,—start not,—I say, private :
If you are my true daughter,
You'll venture alone with one man, though he came
Like Jupiter to Semele, and come off too :
And therefore, when he kisses you, kiss close.

Marg. I've heard this is the wanton's fashion, sir,
Which I must never learn.

Sir G. Learn any thing,
And from any creature, that may make thee great ;
E'en from the devil himself : stand not on form ;
Words are no substances.

Marg. With your leave, sir,—in worldly policy,
This is not the way to make me his wife :
My virgin scruples overcome so soon,
Cannot but assure him,
I, that am light to him, will not hold weight
When tempted by others ; so, in judgement,
If, to obey you, I forget my honour,
He must and will forsake me.

Sir G. How ! forsake thee ?
Do I wear a sword for fashion ? or is this arm
Shrunk up, or wither'd ? Does there live a man,

Of that large list I have encounter'd with,
 Can truly say I e'er gave inch of ground
 Not purchas'd with his blood that did oppose me?
 Forsake thee!—He dares not.

Though all his captains, echoes to his will,
 Stood arm'd by his side, to justify the wrong,
 And he himself at the head of his bold troop;
 Spite of his lordship, and his colonelship,
 I'd make him render

A bloody and a strict account, and force him,
 By marrying thee, to cure thy wounded honour.
 Meg, I have said it. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Enter MARRALL, hastily, L.H.U.E.

Mar. Sir, sir, the man of honour's come,
 Newly alighted.

Sir G. In, there, without reply, and wait my call:
 And do as I command, or thou art lost.

[*Exit Margaret, R.H.*]

Is the loud music I gave order for,
 Ready to receive him?

Mar. (*On Sir G's, L.H.*) 'Tis, sir.

Sir G. Let 'em sound

A princely welcome. [*Exit Marrall, L.H.U.E*]

Roughness, awhile leave me;

For fawning now, a stranger to my nature,
 Must make way for me. (*Music.*)

Enter MARRALL, LOVELL, and ALLWORTH, L.H.U.E
preceded and followed by Servants.

Lov. Sir, you meet your trouble.

Sir G. What you are pleas'd to style so, is an honour
 above my worth and fortunes.

Re-enter GREEDY, R.H.

Allw. (*Aside.*) Strange! so humble!

Sir G. A justice of peace, my lord.

(*Presents Greedy to him.*)

Lov. Your hand, good sir.

Gree. (*Aside.*) This is a lord: some would think
this a favour;

•But I had rather have my hand in my dumpling.

Sir G. Room for my lord.

Lov. I miss, sir, your fair daughter.
To crown my welcome.

Sir G. May it please my lord
To taste a glass of Greek wine first; and suddenly
She shall attend, my lord.

Lov. You'll be obey'd, sir.

[*Exeunt all but Sir Giles, L.H.*

Sir G. 'Tis to my wish; as soon as come, ask for
Why, Meg! Meg Overreach! [her.

Re-enter MARGARET, R.H.

How! tears in your eyes!

Hah! dry 'em quickly, or I'll dig 'em out.

Is this a time to whimper? meet that greatness

That flies into thy bosom; think what 'tis

For me to say, my honourable daughter.

No more; but be instructed, or expect—

*Re-enter LOVELL, ALLWORTH, GREEDY, and
MARRALL, L.H.*

A fine girl, my lord.

Lov. (*Crosses to Margaret.*) As I live a rare one!—
(*Salutes her.*)

Allw. He's ta'en already: I am lost.

Sir G. That kiss
Came twanging off; I like it: (*Aside.*)—Quit the room.
[*Exeunt Greedy, Marrall, and Allworth, R.H.*

A little bashful, my good lord, but you,
I hope, will teach her boldness.

Lov. I am happy
In such a scholar: but—

Sir G. I am too old to learn,
And therefore leave you to yourselves.—Remember.

[*Aside to Margaret, and Exit, R.H.*

Lov. You see, fair lady, your father is solicitous

To have you change the barren name of virgin
Into a hopeful wife.

Marg. His haste, my lord,
Holds no power o'er my will.

Lov. But o'er your duty.

Marg. Which, forc'd too much, may break.

Lov. Bend rather, sweetest :
Think of your years.

Marg. Too few to match with yours.

Lov. I can advance you.

Marg. To a hill of sorrow ;
Where every hour I may expect to fall,
But never hope firm footing. You are noble,
I of a low descent, however rich ;
O, my good lord, I could say more, but that
I dare not trust these walls.

Lov. Pray you, trust my ear then.

(*They whisper.*)

Re-enter Sir GILES, listening, R. H.

Sir G. Close at it ! whispering !—this is excellent !
And by their postures, a consent on both parts.

Re-enter GREEDY, R.H.

Gree. Sir Giles ! Sir Giles !

Sir G. The great fiend stop that clapper !

Gree. It must ring out, sir, when my belly rings
noon.

The bak'd meats are run out, the roast turn'd powder.

Sir G. Stop your insatiate jaws, or
I shall powder you.

Gree. Beat me to dust, I care not ;
In such a cause as this, I'll die a martyr.

Sir G. Disturb my lord,
When he is in discourse ?

Gree. Is't a time to talk
When we should be munching ?

Sir G. Mum, vill in ; vanish ! Shall we break a
Almost made up ? [bargain

[*Exit, thrusting Greedy off before him, R.H.*

Lov. Lady, I understand you,
And wish you happy in your choice ; believe it,
I'll be a careful pilot to direct
Your yet uncertain bark to a port of safety.

Marg. So shall your honour save two lives, and bind
Your slaves for ever. [us

Lov. I'm in the act rewarded,
Since it is good : Howe'er, you must put on
An amorous carriage towards me, till our purpose
Be brought to the wish'd end.

Marg. I'm prone to that.

Lov. Now break we off our conference.—Sir Giles !
Where is Sir Giles ?

*Enter Sir GILES, ALLWORTH, GREEDY, and
MARRAIL, R.H.*

Sir G. My noble lord ; and how
Does your lordship find her ?

Lov. Apt, Sir Giles, and coming ;
And I like her the better.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) So do I too.

Lov. Yet should we take forts at the first assault,
'Twere poor in the defendant : I will confirm her
With a love-letter or two, which I shall have
Deliver'd by my page : we must, for form, give way
to't.

Sir G. With all my soul. (*Crosses to Allworth, L.H.*)
A towardly gentleman !
Your hand, good master Allworth : know my house
Is ever open to you.

Allw. (*Aside.*) 'Twas shut till now.

Sir G. (*To Margaret.*) Well done, well done, my
honourable daughter !
Thou'rt so already,—know this gentle youth,
And cherish him, my honourable daughter !

Marg. (*Crosses to Allworth.*) I shall, with my best
care. (*Servants without, L.H.*)

Servants. Room, room,—make way there for my lady.
Sir G. What noise ?

Gree More stops.
Before we go to dinner ! O my guts !

*Enter Servants. Lady ALLWORTH and
WELLBORN, I.H.*

Lady. (To *Wellborn*.) If I find welcome,
You shall share in't, if not I'll back again ;
For I come arm'd for all can be objected.

Lov. How ! the Lady Allworth ? (*Crosses to her.*)

Sir G. And thus attended ! (*Lovell presents Margaret to Lady Allworth—Marrall and Sir Giles a little up the stage*)

Mar. No, I am a dolt ;
The spirit of lies hath enter'd me.

Lov. Noble lady,
This is favour, to prevent my visit,
The service of my life can never equal.

Lady. My lord I laid wait for you, and much hop'd
You would have made my poor house your first inn :
And therefore, doubting that you might forget me,
I borrow'd so much from my long restraint,
And took the air, in person to invite you.

Lov. Your bounties are so great, they rob me, madam,
Of words to give you thanks.

Lady. Good Sir Giles Overreach.—(*Bows to him.*)
How dost thou, Marrall ?—Lik'd you my meat so ill,
You'll dine no more with me ?

Gree. I will when you please,
An't like your ladyship.

Lady. When you please master Greedy ;
If meat can do't, you shall be satisfied.
And now, my lord, pray take into your knowledge
This gentleman : howe'er his outside's coarse,
(*Presents Wellborn.*)

His inward linings are as fine and fair
As any man's :
And howsoe'er is honour carries him
To be thus accoutred, or what taint soe'er,

For his wild life, hath stuck upon his fame,
 He may ere long, with boldness rank himself
 With some that have contemn'd him. Sir Giles Over-
 If I am welcome, bid him so. [reach,

Sir G. My nephew! (*Crosses to Wellborn, L.H.*)
 He has been too long a stranger: faith, you have:
 Pray, let it be mended. (*All converse apart, but Sir
 Giles and Marrall.*)

Mar. Why, sir, what do you mean?
 'This is rogue Wellborn, monster, prodigy,
 That should hang, or drown himself; no man of worship,
 Much less your nephew.

Sir G. Well, sirrah, we shall reckon
 For this hereafter. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Mar. I'll not lose my joke,
 Though I be beaten dead for't. (*Retires up the stage.*)

Well (*Advancing.*) Let my silence plead
 In my excuse, my lord, till better leisure
 Offer itself, to hear a full relation
 Of my poor fortunes. (*Aside to Wellborn.*)

Lov. I would hear, and help 'em. (*Bell rings, R.H.*)

Sir G. Your dinner waits you.

Lov. Pray you, lead; we follow.

Lady. Dear master Wellborn, come:—You are my
 guest. (*Music.*)
 [*Takes Wellborn's hand.—Music.—Exeunt all but
 Greedy, R.H.*]

Gree. Dear master Wellborn! so she said: Heaven,
 heaven!
 If my belly would give me leave, I could ruminate
 All day on this: I've granted twenty warrants
 'To have him committed, from all the prisons in the shire,
 'To Nottingham gaol! And now, *Dear master Wellborn!*
 And, *My good nephew!*—But I play the fool,
 To stand here prating, and forget my dinner.

Re-enter MARRALL, R.H.

Are they set, Marrall?

Mar. Long since—Pray you, a word, sir.

Gree. No wording now.

Mar. In troth, I must: My master

Knowing you are his good friend, makes bold with you
 And does entreat you, more guests being come in
 Than he expected, especially his nephew,
 The table being full too, you would excuse him,
 And wait to sup with him on the cold meat.

Gree. How ! no dinner,
 After all my care ?

Mar. 'Tis but a penance for
 A meal ; besides, you broke your fast—

Gree. That was
 But a bit to stay my stomach. A man in commission.
 Give place to a tatterdemalion ?

Mar. No bug* words, sir ?
 Should his worship hear you,—

Gree. Lose my dumpling too,
 And butter'd toast and woodcocks ?

Mar. Come, have patience.
 If you will dispense a little with your justiceship,
 And sit with the maids below there, you'll have
 dumpling,
 Woodcock, and butter'd toast too, by and by.

Gree. This revives me :
 I will gorge there sufficiently.

Mar. There's your way, sir. [*Exit Marrall, R.H.*]

Gree. I fear, we shall have but short commons below.
 I am no cameleon, to feed on air ; nor Frenchman,
 to feast on a soused frog, or regale on an ounce of
 beef in a Mediterranean sea of soup : I love to see the
 board well spread, groaning under its savoury burden,
 smoking-hot, from spit, furnace, and caldron.—Ods-
 me, Sir Giles ! [*Exit Greedy, L.H.*]

Enter SIR GILES, R.H.

Sir G. She's caught ! O, woman ! What, neglect
 my lord,
 And all her compliments apply to Wellborn !
 The garments of her widowhood laid by,
 She now appears as glorious as the spring.
 Her eyes fix'd on him, in the wine she drinks,

* *Bug,*] frightful, terrific.

He being her pledge, she send^d him burning kisses,
 And sits on thorns, till she be private with him.
 She leaves my meat, to feed upon his looks ;
 And if in our discourse he be but nam'd,
 From her a deep sigh follows. But why grieve I
 At this ? It makes for me ; if she prove his,
 All that is hers is mine, as I will work him.

Enter MARRALL, R.H.

Mar. Sir, the whole board is troubled at your rising.

Sir G. No matter, I'll excuse it : 'Prythee, Marrall,
 Watch an occasion to invite my nephew
 To speak with me in private.

Mar. Who ! the rogue
 The lady scorn'd to look on ?

Sir G. Sirrah, sirrah !

Enter LOVELL, MARGARET, and ALLWORTH, R.H.

Sir G. (*To Lov.*) My good lord, excuse my man-

Lov. There needs none, sir Giles ; [ners.
 I may ere long say—father, when it please
 My dearest mistress to give warrant to it.

Sir G. She shall seal to it, my lord, and make me
 happy. (*Lady Allworth, &c. without.*)

Lady. Nay, master Wellborn,—

Mar. See, sir, she comes, and cannot be without him.

Sir G. Grosser and grosser !

*Enter Lady ALLWORTH, WELLBORN, and
 Servants, R.H.*

Lady. Provide my coach,
 I'll instantly away ;—My thanks, Sir Giles,
 For my entertainment.—(*Mar. whispers Well. R.H.*)

Sir G. 'Tis your nobleness,
 To think it such.

Lady. I must do you a further wrong,
 In taking away your honourable guest.

Lov. I wait on you, madam: farewell good sir Giles.

Lady. Nay, come master Wellborn.—

[*Exit Marrall, R.H.*]

I must not leave you behind; in sooth I must not.

Sir G. (Crosses to Lady A.) Rob me not, madam,
of all joys at once:

Let my nephew stay behind: he shall have my coach,
And after some small conference between us,
Soon overtake your ladyship.

Lady. Stay not long, sir.

Lov. Farewell, dear Margaret! You shall every day
Hear from your servant, by my faithful page.

Allw. 'Tis a service I am proud of. (*Music.*)

[*Exeunt LOVELL, Lady ALLWORTH, ALLWORTH,
and Servants, L.H.U.E.*]

Sir G. Daughter to your chamber.

[*Exit Margaret, R.H.*]

You may wonder, nephew,
After so long an enmity between us,
I should desire your friendship.

Well. So I do sir;

'Tis strange to me.

Sir G. But I'll make it no wonder;
And, what is more unfold my nature to you.
We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen,
Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
To lift 'em up, but rather set our feet
Upon their heads, to press 'em to the bottom;
As I must yield, with you I practis'd it;
But, now I see you in a way to rise,
I can and will assist you. This rich lady,
(And I am glad of't,) is enamour'd of you.

Well. No such thing:
Compassion rather, sir.

Sir G. Well, in a word,
Because your stay is short, I'll have you seen
No more in this base shape; nor shall she say,
She married you like a beggar, or in debt.

Well. (Aside.) He'll run into the noose, and save
my labour.

Sir G. You have a trunk of rich clothes not far hence,
 In pawn; I will redeem 'em; and, that no clamour
 May taint your credit for your petty debts,
 You shall have wherewithal to cut 'em off,
 And go a freeman to the wealthy lady.

Well. This done, sir, out of love, and no ends else—

Sir G. As it is, nephew.

Well. Binds me still your servant.

Sir G. No compliments: you're staid for. Ere
 you've supp'd,
 You shall hear from me. My coach, knaves, for my
 nephew!

To-morrow I will visit you.

Well. Here's an uncle
 In a man's extremes! How much they do belie you,
 That say you are hard-hearted!

Sir G. My deeds, nephew,
 Shall speak my love; what men report, I weigh not.
 [*Exeunt Well. L.H. Sir G. R.H.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Lady Allworth's House.*

LOVELL seated R.H. sealing a Letter, and *ALLWORTH*
waiting on him, discovered.

Lov. 'Tis well.—May this succeed!—(*Rises and advances.*)

I now discharge you
 From further service: mind your own affairs;
 I hope they'll prove successful.

Allw. What is blest
 With your good wish, my lord, cannot but prosper.
 Let after-times report, and to your honour,
 How much I stand engaged, for I want language
 To speak my debt; yet, if a tear or two

Of joy, for your much goodness, can supply
My tongue's defects, I could—

Lov. Nay, do not melt :

This ceremonial thanks, to me's, superfluous.

(*Sir Giles Overreach, &c. without, L.H.*)

Sir G. Is my lord stirring?

Lov. 'Tis he ! O, here's your letter.—(*Gives letter.*)

Let him in. (*Allworth opens the door.*)

Enter Sir GILES, GREEDY, and MARRALL, L.H.D.

Sir G. A good day to my lord !

Lov. You are an early riser,

Sir Giles.

Sir G. And reason to attend your lordship.

Lov. And you, too, master Greedy, up so soon !

Gree. In troth, my lord, after the sun is up

I cannot sleep : for I've a foolish stomach

That croaks for breakfast. With your lordship's favour

(*Crosses to Lovell, R. H.*)

I have a serious question to demand

Of my worthy friend *Sir Giles.*

Lov. Pray you, use your pleasure. (*Retires up the stage.*)

Gree. How far, *Sir Giles*, and pray you answer me
Upon your credit, hold you it to be

From your manor-house to this of my Lady Allworth's ?

Sir G. Why, some four mile.

Gree. How ! four mile, good *Sir Giles*—

Upon your reputation, think better ;

For four mile's riding

Could not have rais'd so huge an appetite

As I feel gnawing on me.

Mar. (*L.H.*) Whether you ride,

Or go afoot, you're that way still provided,

An't please your worship.

Sir G. How now, sirrah ? prating

Before my lord ! no deference ! Go to my nephew,

See all his debts discharg'd, and help his worship

To fit on his rich suit.

Mar. I may fit you too. [*Exit Marrall, L.H.D.*]

Lov. I have writ this morning

A few lines to my mistress, your fair daughter.

Sir G. 'Twill fire her; for she's wholly your's already. Sweet master Allworth, take my ring; 'twill carry you To her presence, I dare warrant you; and there plead For my good lord, if you should find occasion.

That done, pray, ride to Nottingham, get a license, Still by this token.—(*To Lov.*) I will have't dispatch'd, And suddenly, my lord, that I may say, My honourable, nay, right honourable daughter.

Gree. (*Stopping Allworth, who is crossing towards L.H.D.*)

Take my advice, young gentleman; get your breakfast; 'Tis unwholesome to ride fasting: I'll eat with you, And that abundantly.

Sir G. Some Fury's in that gut: Hungry again! did you not devour this morning A shield of brawn, and a barrel of Colchester oysters?

Gree. Why, that was sir, only to scour my stomach, A kind of preparative.

Lov. Haste your return.

Allw. I will not fail, my lord. [*Exit Allw. L.H.D.*]

Gree. Nor I, to line

My Christmas coffer. [*Exit Greedy, L.H.D.*]

Sir G. To my wish; (*They sit.*) we're private, I come not to make offer with my daughter A certain portion; that were poor and trivial: In one word I pronounce, all that is mine, In lands or leases, ready coin or goods, With her, my lord, comes to you: nor shall you have One motive to induce you to believe I live too long; since every year I'll add Something unto the heap, which shall be your's too.

Lov. You are a right kind father.

Sir G. You shall have reason To think me such.

How do you like this seat of Lady Allworth's? It is well wooded and well water'd, the acres Fertile and rich; would it not serve, for change, To entertain your friends in a summer progress? What thinks my noble lord?

Lov. 'Tis a wholesome air,
And well-built pile : and she that's mistress of it,
Worthy the large revenue.

Sir G. She the mistress !
It may be so for a time ; but, let my lord
Say, only that he but likes it, and would have it,
I say ere long 'tis his.

Lov. Impossible !

Sir G. You conclude too fast, not knowing me,
Nor the engines that I work by. 'Tis not alone
The Lady Allworth's lands ;—for those, once Well-
born's,

As, by her dotage to him, I know they will be,
Shall soon be mine ;—but point out any man's
In all the shire, and say they lie convenient
And useful for your lordship, and once more
I say aloud they're yours. (*They rise.*)

Lov. I dare not own
What's by unjust and cruel means extorted :
My fame and credit are more dear to me,
Than thus to expose 'em to be censur'd by
The public voice.

Sir G. You run, my lord, no hazard.
Your reputation shall still stand as fair
In all good mens opinions, as now :
For though I do condemn report myself,
As a mere sound, I still will be so tender
Of what concerns you, in all points of honour,
That the immaculate whiteness of your fame,
Shall ne'er be sullied with one taint or spot.
All my ambition is, to have my daughter
Right honourable, which my lord can make her :
And, might I live to dance upon my knee
A young Lord Lovell, born by her unto you,
I write *nil ultra* to my proudest hopes.
As for possessions and annual rents,
Equivalent to maintain you in the port
Your noble birth and present state requires,
I do remove that burthen from your shoulders,
And take it on mine own ; for, though I ruin

The country, to supply your riotous waste,
The scourge of prodigals, want, shall never find you.

Lov. Are you not mov'd with the sad imprecations
And curses of whole families, made wretched
By your sinister practices?

Sir G. Yes, as rocks are,
When foamy billows split themselves against
Their flinty ribs; or as the moon is mov'd,
When wolves, with hunger pin'd, howl at her bright-
I'm of a solid temper, and like these, [ness.
Steer on a constant course.

Nay, when my ears are pierc'd with widows' cries,
And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold,
I only think what 'tis to have my daughter
Right honourable; and 'tis a powerful charm
Makes me insensible of remorse, or pity,
Or the least sting of conscience.

Lov. I admire
The toughness of your nature.

Sir G. 'Tis for you,
My lord, and for my daughter, I am marble;
Nay more, if you will have my character
In little, I enjoy more true delight
In my arrival to my wealth these dark
And crooked ways, than you shall e'er take pleasure
In spending what my industry hath compass'd.
My haste commands me hence; in one word, therefore,
Is it a match, my lord?

Lov. I hope that is past doubt now.

Sir G. Then rest secure; not the hate of all man-
kind here,

Nor fear of what can fall on me hereafter,
Shall make me study aught but your advancement
One story higher: an earl! if gold can do it.
Doubt not my honour, nor my faith to you;
Though I am borne thus headlong by my will,
You may make choice of what belief you please,
To me 'tis equal; so, my lord, good morrow.

[*Exit Sir Giles, L. H. D.*

Lov. He's gone : I wonder how the earth can bear
 I, that have liv'd a soldier, [him !
 And stood the enemy's violent charge undaunted,
 To hear this horrid monster, am all bath'd
 In a cold sweat : yet, like a mountain, he
 Is no more shaken, than Olympus is
 When angry Boreas loads his double head*
 With sudden drifts of snow.

Enter Lady ALLWORTH, M. D.— advances, R.H.

Lady. Save you, my lord !
 Disturb I not your privacy ?

Lov. No, good madam ;
 For your own sake, I'm glad you came no sooner :
 Since this bold, bad man, Sir Giles Overreach,
 Made such a plain discovery of himself,
 And read this morning such a devilish matins,
 That I should think it a sin next to his
 But to repeat it.

Lady. I ne'er press'd, my lord,
 On others' privacy ; yet, against my will,
 Walking for health's sake, in the gallery here,
 I was made,
 So loud and vehement he was, partaker
 Of his tempting offers.
 But, my good lord, if I may use my freedom,
 As to an honour'd friend,—

Lov. You lessen else
 Your favour to me.

Lady. I dare, then, say thus :
 However common men
 Make sordid wealth the object and sole end
 Of their industrious aims, 'twill not agree
 With those of noble blood, of fame, and honour.

Lov. Madam, 'tis confess'd ;
 But what infer you from it ?

* Either Massinger, or his transcriber, (says Gifford) has mistaken Olympus for Parnassus.

Lady. This, my lord;
 I allow the heir of Sir Giles Overreach, Margaret,
 A maid well qualified, and the richest match
 Our north part can make boast of; yet she cannot,
 With all that she brings with her, stop their mouths
 That never will forget who was her father;
 Or that my husband Allworth's lands, and Wellborn's
 (How wrung from both, needs now no repetition,)
 Were real motives that more work'd your lordship
 To join your families, than her form and virtues:
 You may conceive the rest.

Lov. I do, good madam,
 And long since have consider'd it.
 And 'tis my resolution, ne'er to wed
 With the rich Margaret, Overreach's daughter.

Lady. (*Aside.*) I'am glad to hear this.
 Why then, my lord, pretend you marriage to her?
 Dissimulation but ties false knots
 On that strait line, by which you hitherto
 Have measur'd all your actions.

Lov. I make answer,
 And aptly, with a question. Wherefore have you,
 That, since your husband's death, have liv'd a strict
 And chaste nun's life, on the sudden given yourself
 To visits and entertainments? Think you, madam,
 'Tis not grown public conference; or the favours
 Which you so prodigally have thrown on Wellborn,
 Incur not censure?

Lady. I'm innocent here; and, on my life, I swear,
 My ends are good.

Lov. So, on my soul, are mine
 To Margaret: but leave both to the event;
 And, since this friendly privacy does serve
 As a fair offer'd means unto ourselves
 To search each other further,—you having shewn
 Your care of me, I, my respect to you,—
 Deny me not, I dare not yet say more,
 An afternoon's discourse.

Lady. Affected coyness might deny your suit;
 But, such your honour, frankness shall become me,

And bid my tongue avow my honest heart :
I shall attend your lordship.

Lov. My heart thanks you.

[*Exit Lovell, R. H. Lady Allworth, M.D.*]

SCENE II.—*A Village.*

Enter FROTH, and TAPWELL, from the House.

Tap. Undone, undone ! This was your counsel,
Froth.

Froth. Mine ! I defy thee : did not master Marrall—
He has marr'd all, I am sure,—strictly command us,
On pain of Sir Giles Overreach's displeasure,
To turn the gentleman out of doors ?

Tap. 'Tis true :
But now, he's his uncle's darling ; and has got
Master Justice Greedy, since he fill'd his belly,
At his commandment to do any thing.
Woe, woe to us !

Froth. He may prove merciful.

Tap. Troth, we do not deserve it at his hands.

Froth. Then, he knows all the passages of our house ;
As the receiving of stolen goods, and so forth.
When he was rogue Wellborn, no man would believe
And then his information could not hurt us : [him ;
But, now he is right worshipful again,
Who dares but doubt his testimony ?

Tap. Undone, undone ! Methinks
I see thee, Froth, already in a cart ;
And my hand hissing,
If I scape the halter, with the letter R
Printed upon it.

Froth. 'Would that were the worst !
That were but nine days' wonder. As for credit,
We've none to lose ; but we shall lose his custom :
There's the devil on't.

Tap. He has summon'd all his creditors by the drum ;
'Tis said, he has found such a new way

To pay his old debts, as, 'tis very likely,
He shall be chronicled for it.

Froth. But are you sure his worship
Comes this way to my lady's?—(*Drum,—and cry
without of—Brave master Wellborn!*)

Tap. Hark I hear him.

Froth. Be ready with your petition, and present it
To his good grace. (*Drum,—and cry again.*)

*Enter GREEDY, WELLBORN in a rich habit, MARRALL,
—Vintner, Tailor, with other Creditors,—ORDER
FURNACE, and AMBLE, L.H.U.E.—TAPWELL and
FROTH, kneeling, deliver a Petition.*

Well. How's this? petition'd too!
But note what miracles the payment of
A little trash, and a rich suit of clothes,
Can work upon these rascals. I shall be,
I think, Prince Wellborn.

Mar. When your worship's married,
You may be—I know; what I hope to see you.

Well. Then look thou for advancement.

Mar. To be known
Your worship's bailiff, is the mark I shoot at.

Well. And thou shalt hit it.

Mar. Pray you, sir, dispatch
These needy followers: and for my admittance,
(*Tapwell and Froth flattering Justice Greedy, R.H.*)
Provided you'll defend me from Sir Giles,
Whose service I am weary of, I'll say something
You shall give thanks for.

Well. Fear me not Sir Giles.—(*Well. and Mar.
converse apart. R.H.*)

Gree. (*Advancing, Tap. and Froth on his R.H.*)
Who? Tapwell—I remember! thy wife brought me,
Last new year's tide, a couple of fat turkies.

Tap. And shall do, every Christmas, let your wor-
But stand my friend now. [ship,

Gree. How! with master Wellborn?

I can do any thing with him, on such terms.—
 See you this honest couple? (*To Well.*) 'They're good
 As ever drew out spigot. Have they not [souls
 A pair of honest faces?

Well. I o'erheard you,
 And the bribe he promis'd. You are cozen'd in 'em;
 For, of all the scum that grew rich by my riots,
 This, for a most unthankful knave, and this,
 For a base quean and thief, have worst deserv'd me;
 And therefore speak not for them. By your place,
 You're rather to do me justice.—Lend me your ear:—
 Forget his turkies, and call in his license,
 And every season I will send you venison,
 To feast a mayor and corporation.

Gree. I'm chang'd o' the sudden in my opinion.
 Mum.—

Come near; (*To Tap. and Froth.*) nearer, rascal!
 And, now I view him better, did you e'er see
 One look so like an arch knave? his very countenance,
 Should an understanding Judge but look upon him,
 Would hang him, though he were innocent.

Tap. and Froth. Worshipful sir,—

Gree. No; though the great Turk came, instead of
 To beg my favour, I'm inexorable. [turkies,
 Thou'st an ill name: I here do damn thy licence,
 Forbidding thee ever to tap or draw;
 For instantly I will, in mine own person,
 Command the constable to pull down thy sign,
 And do't before I eat.

Froth. No mercy?

Gree. Vanish!—

If I show any, may my promis'd venison choke me!

Tap. Unthankful knaves are ever so rewarded.

[*Exeunt Tapwell and Froth into the House.*]

Well. On, master Greedy: I'll be with you at dinner.

Gree. For heaven's sake, don't stay long;

'Tis almost ready. [*Exit Greedy.* R.II.]

Well. Speak: what are you?

Vint. A decay'd vintner, sir,
 That might have thriv'd but that your worship broke
 With trusting you with muscadine and eggs, [me,

And five-pound suppers, with you after-drinkings,
When you lodg'd upon the Bankside.

Well. I remember.

Vint. I've not been hasty, nor e'er laid to arrest you ;
And therefore, sir,—

Well. Thou art an honest fellow :
I'll set thee up again : (*To Mar.*)—See his bill paid.—
What are you ?

Tui. A tailor once but now mere botcher.
I long time gave you credit for rich clothes :
But, you failing in payment,
I was remov'd from the shop-board, and confin'd
Under a stall.

Well. See him paid :—(*To Murrall.*)—and botch

Tui. I ask no interest, sir. [no more.—

Well. Such tailors need not ;
If their bills are paid in one and twenty years,
'They're seldom losers.—See these men discharg'd.

(*Murrall settles with the Creditors.*)

And, since old debts are clear'd by a new way,
A little bounty will not misbecome me :
'There's something for you all.

(*Gives Money to all the Servants.*)

All the Creditors. Brave master Wellborn !

[*Exeunt Creditors severally.*]

Well. Leave me, good friends : attend upon your lady.

[*Exeunt Amble, Furnace, and Order, R.H.*]

Now, master Marrall, what's the weighty secret
You promis'd to impart ?

Mar. Sir, time nor place

Allow me to relate each circumstance ;
This only, in a word :—I know, Sir Giles
Will come upon you for security
For all the money which he now has lent you ;
'This you must not consent to :
As he grows in heat, as I am sure he will ;
Be you but rough, and say, he's in your debt
Ten times the sum, upon sale of your land :
I'd a hand in't, I speak it to my shame,
When you were defeated of it.

Well. That's forgiven.

Mar. I shall deserve it—Then urge him to produce
The deed in which you pass'd it over to him ;
Which, I, know, he'll have about him, to deliver
To the Lord Lovell.—I'll instruct you further,
As I wait on your worship : If I play not my prize*
To your full content, and your uncle's much vexation,
Hang up Jack Marrali.

Well. I rely upon thee. [*Exeunt* R.H.]

SCENE III.—*A Room in Sir Giles's House.*

Enter MARGARET, *with a Letter in her Hand*, and
ALLWORTH, R.H.

Allw. Whether to yield the first praise to my lord's
Unequall'd temperance, or your constant sweetness,
I yet rest doubtful.

Marg. Give it to Lord Lovell ;
For what in him was bounty, in me's duty.
I make but payment of a debt to which,
My vows, in that high office register'd,
Are faithful witnesses.

Allw. 'Tis true, my dearest ;
Yet,—when I call to mind how many fair ones
Make willful shipwreck of their faiths and oaths,
To fill the arms of greatness ;
While you, with matchless virtue, thus hold out,
Spurning at honour, when it comes to court you,—
I am so tender of your good, that faintly
I wish myself that right ; you're pleas'd to do me.

Marg. To me what's title, when content is wanting ?
Or the smooth brow, and wealth,
Of a pleas'd sire that slaves me to his will ;—
And, so his vain ambition may be feasted
By my obedience, and he see me great,
Leaves to my soul nor faculties nor power
To make her own election ?

* *Prize*, part.

Allw. But the dangers
That follow the repulse,—

Marg. To me they're nothing :
Let Allworth love, I cannot be unhappy.
Suppose the worst,—that, in his rage, he kill me,
A tear or two, by you dropt on my hearse,
In sorrow for my fate, will call back life
So far as but to say, that I die your's ;
I then shall rest in peace.

Allw. Heaven avert
Such trials of your true affection to me !
Nor will it unto you, that are all mercy,
Show so much rigour. But, since we must run
Such desperate hazards, let us do our best
To steer between 'em.

Marg. Lord Lovell is our friend ;
And, though but a young actor, second me
In doing to the life what he has plotted.

Enter SIR GILES, L.H.U.E.

The end may yet prove happy.—(*Aside.*)—Now, my
Allworth. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Allw. (*Aside.*) To your letter, and put on a seem-
ing anger.

Marg. I'll pay my lord all debts due to his title :
And, when with terms not taking from his honour
He does solicit me, I shall gladly hear him ;
But, in this peremptory, nay, commanding way,
To fix a time and place, without my knowledge,
A priest to tie the knot can ne'er be undone
Till death unloose it, is a confidence
In his lordship will deceive him. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Allw. I hope better, good lady.

Marg. Hope, sir, what you please ; for me,
I must take a safe and secure course : I have
A father, and without his full consent,
Though all lords of the land kneel'd for my favour,
I can grant nothing. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Sir G. (*Aside, near the centre.*) I like this obe-
dience ;

But whatsoe'er my lord writes, must and shall be
 Accepted and embrac'd.—Sweet master Allworth,
 You shew yourself a true and faithful servant
 To your good lord : he has a jewel of you.
 How ! frowning, Meg ? Are these looks to receive
 A messenger from my lord ? What's this ? give me it.
Marg. A piece of arrogant paper !

(*Sir Giles reads.*)

*Fair mistress, from your servant learn all joys
 That we can hope for, if deferr'd, prove toys ;
 Therefore this instant, and in private, meet
 A husband that will gladly at your feet
 Lay down his honours, tendering them to you
 With all content, the church being paid her due.*

Sir G. Is this the arrogant piece of paper ? fool !
 Will you still be one ? I'the name of madness, what
 Could his good honour write more to content you ?
 Is there aught else to be wish'd, after these two
 That are already offer'd ? Marriage first,
 And lawful pleasure after :—What would you more ?

Marg. Why, sir, I would be married like your
 daughter ;
 Not hurried away i'the night I know not whither,
 Without all ceremony ; no friends invited,
 To honour the solemnity.

Allw. An't please your honour,
 For so before to-morrow I must style you,
 My lord desires this privacy, in respect
 His honourable kinsmen are far off,
 And his desires to have it done, brook not
 So long delay as to expect their coming ;
 And yet he stands resolv'd, with all due pomp
 To have his marriage at court celebrated,
 When he has brought your honour up to London.

Sir G. He tells you true ; 'tis the fashion on my
 knowledge :
 Yet the good lord to please your pcevishness,
 Must put it off, forsooth !

Marg. I could be contented,

Were you but by, to do a father's part,
And give me in the church.

Sir G. So my lord have you,
What do I care who gives you? Since my lord
Does purpose to be private, I'll not cross him.
I know not, master Allworth, how my lord
May be provided, and therefore there's a purse
Of gold: 'twill serve this night's expense; to-morrow
I'll furnish him with any sums.

Use my ring to my chaplain; he is benefic'd
At my manor of Got'em, and call'd Parson Willdo:
'Tis no matter for a license; I'll bear him out in't.

Marg. With your favour, sir,—what warrant is
your ring?

He may suppose I got that twenty ways,
Without your knowledge; and then, to be refus'd
Were such a stain upon me!—If you pleas'd, sir,
Your presence would do better.

Sir G. Still perverse!

I say again I will not cross my lord:
Yet I'll prevent you too.—Paper and ink there.

Allw. Sir, 'tis ready here.

Sir G. I thank you.—I can write then to my chap-
lain.—(*Sir Giles sits down and writes.*)

Allw. Sir, sir,—

You may, if you please, leave out the name of my
lord,

In respect he would be private, and only write,—
Marry her to this gentleman.

Sir G. Well advis'd—

'Tis done.—Away!—

(*Gives Allworth the paper,—Margaret kneels.*)

My blessing? Girl, thou hast it:

Nay, no reply.—Begone good master Allworth:—
This shall be the best night's work you ever made.

Allw. I hope so, sir. [*Exeunt Marg. and Allw. L.H.*]

Sir G. Now all's cock-sure.—

Methinks I hear already knights and ladies
Say, Sir Giles Overreach, how is it with
Your honourable daughter?—

My ends, my ends are compass'd!—Then, for Well-born

And the lands,—were he once married to the widow,—
I have him here.—(*Touching his forehead with his finger.*) I can scarce contain myself,

I am so full of joy; nay joy all over! [*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Hall in Lady Allworth's House.*

Enter LOVELL and LADY ALLWORTH, R.H.

Lady. By this you know how strong the motives
That did, my lord, induce me to dispense [were,
A little with my gravity, to advance
The plots and projects of the down-trod Wellborn.

Lov. What you intended, madam,
For the poor gentleman, hath found good success;
For, as I understand, his debts are paid,
And he once more furnish'd for fair employment;
But all the arts that I have us'd, to raise
The fortunes of your joy and mine, young Allworth,
Stand yet in supposition: though I hope well;
For the young lovers are in wit more pregnant
Than their years can promise.

Lady. Though my wishes
Are with your's, my lord: yet give me leave to fear
The building, though well-grounded. To deceive
Sir Giles, that's both a lion and a fox
In his proceedings, were a work beyond
The strongest undertakers; not the trial
Of two weak innocents.

Lov. Despair not, madam:
Hard things are compass'd oft by easy means.
The cunning statesman, that believes, he fathoms

The counsels of all kingdoms on the earth,
Is by simplicity oft over-reach'd.

Lady. May he be so !—

The young ones have my warmest wishes with them.

Lov. O, gentle lady, prove as kind to me !
You've deign'd to hear, now grant, my honest suit ;
And, if you may be won to make me happy,
But join your hand to mine, and that shall be
A solemn contract.

Lady. I were blind to my own good,
Should I refuse it ; yet, my lord, receive me
As such a one, the study of whose whole life
Shall know no other object but to please you.

Lov. If I return not, with all tenderness,
Equal respect to you, may I die wretched !

Lady. There needs no protestation, my lord,
To her that cannot doubt.—

Enter WELLBORN, L.H.

You're welcome, sir :

Now you look like yourself. (*Crosses to Wellborn.*)

Well. And will continue
Such, in my free acknowledgement that I am
Your creature, madam,—and will never hold
My life mine own, when you please to command it.

Lov. It is a thankfulness that well becomes you.

Lady. For me, I am happy,
That my endeavours prosper'd.—Saw you of late
Sir Giles, your uncle ?

Well. I heard of him, madam,
By his minister, Marrall. He's grown into strange
passions

About his daughter : this last night, he look'd for
Your lordship at his home ; but, missing you,
And Margaret not appearing, he is coming
To seek her here at Lady Allworth's house.
His wise head is much perplex'd and troubled.

Lov. I hope my project took.

Lady. I strongly hope it.

(*Sir Giles and Murrall without, L.H.*)

Sir G. (Without.) Ha! find my daughter, thou huge lump of nothing,

I'll bore thine eyes out else.

Well May it please your lordship, (*Crosses to Lov.*)
For some ends of mine own, but to withdraw
A little out of sight, though not of hearing,
You may, perhaps, have sport.

Lov. You shall direct me. [*Exit Lovell, R.H.S.E.*]

Sir G. (Without.) Idiot! booby! booby!

Mar. (Without.) O, O, O,—

Sir G. (Without.) I shall sol-fa you, rogue!

Mar. (Without.) Sir, for what cause
Do you use me thus?

*Enter SIR GILES with distracted looks, driving in
MARRALL before him, L.H.*

Sir G. Cause slave? Why, I am angry,
And thou a subject only fit for beating.
And so to cool my choler. Look to the writing:
Let but the seal be broke upon the box
That has slept in my cabinet these three years,
I'll rack thy soul for't.

Mar. (Aside.) I may yet cry quittance:
Though now I suffer, and dare not resist.

Sir G. Lady, by your leave: did you see my daughter, lady?
And the lord her husband? Are they in your house?
If they are, discover, that I may bid 'em joy;
And, as an entrance to her place of honour,
See you, on her left hand, bending down low,
When she nods on you; which you must receive
As a special favour.

Lady. When I know, Sir Giles,
Her state requires such ceremony, I shall pay it;
But, in the meantime,
I give you to understand, I neither know
Nor care where her honour is.

Sir G. When you once see her
 Led and supported by the lord her husband,
 You'll be taught better. (*Crosses to Wellborn.*)—Ne-
Well. Well? [pew,—

Sir G. No more !

Well. 'Tis all I owe you.

Sir G. Have your redeem'd rags
 Made you thus insolent ?

Well. Insolent to you !

Why, what are you, sir, pray, unless in years,
 More than myself ?

Sir G. His fortune swells him ;—
 'Tis rank,—he's married. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Lady. (*Aside.*) This is excellent !

Sir G. Sir, in calm language, though I seldom use it,
 (*Crosses to centre, Lady Alworth, on L.H.*)
 I am familiar with the cause that makes you
 Bear up thus bravely ; there's a certain buzz
 Of a stolen marriage,—do you hear?—of a stolen
 marriage ;
 In which, 'tis said, there's somebody hath been cozen'd ;
 I name no parties.

Well. Well, sir, and what follows ?

(*Lady Alworth turns away.*)

Sir G. Marry this, since you are so peremptory : re-
 member,

Upon mere hope of your great match, I lent you
 Some certain monies ; put me in good security,
 And suddenly, by mortgage or by statute,
 Of some of your new possessions, or I'll have you
 Dragg'd in your lavender* robes to the gaol ; you know
 And therefore do not trifle. [me,

Well. Can you be

So cruel to your nephew, *Now he's in*

The way to rise? Was this the courtesy

You did me, *in pure love, and no ends else ?*

Sir G. End me no ends ! Engage the whole estate,

* To lay a thing in *lavender*, was a cant phrase for pawning.

And force your spouse to sign it ; you shall have
Three or four thousand more, to roar and swagger,
And revel in drunken taverns.

Well. And beg after—
Mean you not so ?

Sir G. My thoughts are mine and free.
Shall I have security ?

Well. No, indeed, you shall not :
Nor bond, nor bill, nor bare acknowledgement.—
Your great looks fright not me.

Sir G. But my deeds shall.—(*They both draw.*)

Lady. Help, murder ! murder !

*Enter AMBLE, WATCHALL, and ORDER, with drawn
Swords, R.H.*

Sir G. Outbrav'd !

Well. Let him come on,
Arm'd with his cut-throat practices to guard him,
With all his wrongs and injuries about him,
The right that I bring with me will defend me,
And punish his extortion.

Sir G. That I had thee
But single in the field !

Lady. You may ; but make not
My house your quarrelling scene.

Sir G. Were't in a church,
By heaven and hell, I'll do't.

(*Lady Allworth turns away.*)

Mar. (*To Wellhorn.*) Now, put him to
The showing of the deed.

Well. This rage is vain, sir :
For fighting, fear not, you shall have your hands full
Upon the least incitement ; and,—whereas
You charge me with a debt of monies to you,—
If there be law, howe'er you have no conscience,
Either restore my land, or I'll recover
A debt, that's truly due to me from you,
In value ten times more than what you challenge.

Sir G. I in thy debt ? O impudence ; did I not purchase
The land left by thy father, that rich land [chase
That had continued in Wellborn's name

Enter two of Sir Giles's Servants with a Box, L.H.

Twenty descents, which, like a riotous fool,
Thou didst make sale of ?—O, you're come at last.—
(*To Servants.*)

Is not here inclos'd

The deed that does confirm it mine ?

Mar. Now, now,— (*Lady Allworth advances.*)

Well. I do acknowledge none ; I ne'er pass'd o'er
Any such land ; I grant, for a year or two,
You had it in trust : which if you do discharge,
Surrendering the possession, you shall ease
Yourself and me of chargeable suits in law ;
Which if you prove not honest, as I doubt it,
Must of necessity follow.

Lady. In my judgement,
He does advise you well.

Sir G. Good, good ! Conspire
With your new husband, lady : second him
In his di-honest practices : But, when
This manor is extended to my use,
You'll speak in an humbler key, and sue for favour.

Lady. Never ; do not hope it.

Well. Let despair first seize me.

Sir G. Yet, to shut up thy mouth, and make thee give
Thyself the lie, the loud lie, I draw out
The precious evidence ; if thou canst forswear
Thy hand and seal, and make a forfeit of
Thy ears to the pillory,—(*Two servants place the box
on the table, Sir Giles unlocks it, and takes out the
Deed.*)

See !—here's that will make
My interest clear.—Ha !

Lady. A fair skin of parchment !

Well. Indented, I confess, and labels too ;
But neither wax, nor words. How ? thunder-struck !

Is this your precious evidence ? this, that makes
Your interest clear !

Sir G. I am o'erwhelm'd with wonder !
What prodigy is this ? what subtle devil
Hath raz'd out the inscription ? the wax
Turn'd into dust !—
Do you deal with witches, rascal ?
There is a statute for you, which will bring
Your neck in a hempen circle ; yes, there is ;—
And, now 'tis better thought, for, cheater, know,
This juggling shall not save you.

Well. To save thee,
Would beggar the stock of mercy.

(Retires with Lady Allworth up the stage.)

Sir G. Marrall,—Marrall,—

Mar. Sir ?

Sir G. Though the witnesses are dead, your testimony
Help'd with an oath or two; and for thy master,
Thy liberal master, my good honest servant,
I know, thou wilt swear any thing, to dash
This cunning sleight ;
The deed being drawn too
By thee, my careful Marrall, and deliver'd
When thou wast present, will make good my title :—
Wilt thou not swear this ?

Mar. I !—No, I assure you :—*(Breaks from him.)*
I have a conscience, not sear'd up like yours ;
I know no deeds.

Sir G. Wilt thou betray me ? *(Drawing his sword.)*

Mar. Keep him *(Wellborn opposes him)*
From using of his hands, I'll use my tongue
To his no little torment.

Sir G. Mine own varlet
Rebel against me !

Mar. Yes, and uncase you too :
The idiot, the patch, the slave, the booby,
Your drudge can now anatomize you, and lay open

All your black plots, and level with the earth
Your hill of pride ; and shake.

Nay pulverize, the walls you think defend you.

Sir G. O, that I had thee in my gripe I'd tear thee
Joint after joint.

Mar. I know you are a tearer ;
But I'll have first your fangs par'd off, and then
Come nearer to you ; when I have discover'd,
And made it good before the judge, what ways,
And devilish practices, you us'd to cozen with.

Well. All will come out.

Sir G. But that I will live, rogue, to torture thee,
And make thee wish, and kneel, in vain, to die ;
These swords that keep thee from me, should fix here,
Although they made my body but one wound,
But I would reach thee. I play the fool,
And make my anger but ridiculous :
There will be a time and place , there will be, coward,
When you shall feel what I dare do.

Well. I think so :

You dare do any ill ; yet want true valour,
To be honest, and repent.

Sir G. They're words I know not,
Nor c'er will learn. Patience, the beggars' virtue,
Shall find no harbour here.

Enter two of Sir GILES's Servants, L.H.

Lady. Whom have we here ?

Sir G. After these storms,
At length a calm appears.—My chaplain comes.—

*Enter Parson WILLDO, L.H. with a Letter in
his Hand.*

(Lovell appears behind.)

Welcome, most welcome !
There's comfort in thy looks !—Is the deed done ?

Is my daughter married? Say but so, my chaplain,
And I am tame.

Will. Married? Yes I assure you.

Sir G. Then vanish all sad thoughts!
My doubts and fears are in the titles drown'd
Of my honourable, my right honourable daughter.
Now, you that plot against me,
And hop'd to trip my heels up, that contemn'd me,
Think on't and tremble (*Music.*)

Enter LOVELL behind, R.H.U.E.

They come!—I hear the music.—
A lane there for my lord:—

Well. This sudden heat
May yet be cool'd, sir.

Sir G. Make way there for my lady and my lord.
(*Music.*)

*Enter two Servants of Sir GILES, MARGARET, and
ALLWORTH, L.H.*

Marg. (Kneels.) Sir, first your pardon, then your
blessing, with
Your full allowance of the choice I've made.—
Not to dwell
Too long on words, this is my husband.

Sir G. How!

Allw. So I assure you: all the rites of marriage,
With every circumstance, are past:
And for right honourable son-in-law, you may say,
Your dutiful daughter.

Sir G. Devil!—Are they married?

Will. Do a father's part, and say, Heaven give'em
joy!

Sir G. Confusion and ruin! Speak, and speak
Or thou art dead. (*Seizes Willdo.*) [quickly,

Will. They're married.

Sir G. Thou hadst better

Have made a contract with the king of fiends,
Than these.—My brain turns !

Will. Why this rage to me ?—
Is not this your letter, sir ? and these the words,—
Marry her to this gentleman ?

Sir G. It cannot ; (*Crosses to R.H.*)
Nor will I e'er believe it, 'sdeath ! I will not,
That I who never left a print
Where I have trod, for the most curious search
To trace my footsteps, should be gull'd by children !
Baffled and fool'd, and all my hopes and labours
Defeated and made void.

Well. As it appears,
You are so, my grave uncle. (*Willdo retires, L.H.*)

Sir G. Village nurses
Revenge their wrongs with curses ; I'll not waste
A syllable ; but thus I take the life
Which, wretched, I gave to thee.
(*Offers to kill Margaret.*)

(*Allworth and Margaret crosses behind to R.H.*)

Lov. (*Stopping him.*) Hold, for your own sake !
If charity to your daughter have quite left you ;
Will you do an act, though in your hopes lost here,
Can leave no hope for peace or rest hereafter ?
Consider, at the best, you're but a man ;
And cannot so create your aims, but that
They may be cross'd.

Sir G. Lord ! thus I spit at thee,
And at thy counsel ; and again desire thee,—
And as thou art a soldier,—if thy valour
Dares shew itself where multitude and example
Lead not the way, let's quit the house, and change
Six words in private.

Lov. I am ready.

Lady. (*On the R.H. of Lovell.*) Stay, sir :
Contest with one distracted ?

Well. You'll grow like him
Should you answer his vain challenge.

Sir G. Are you pale !
 Borrow their helps ; though Hercules call it odds,
 I'll stand 'gainst all, as I am, hemm'd in thus.—
 Say, there were a squadron
 Of pikes, lin'd through with shot, when I am mounted
 Upon my injuries, shall I fear to charge 'em ;
 No : I'll through the battalia, and, that routed,
 I'll fall to execution.—(*Crosses to centre.*)

(*Attempts to draw his sword.*)

Ha ! I'm feeble :
 Some undone widow sits upon mine arm,
 And takes away the use of't ; and my sword,
 Glued to my scabbard with wrong'd orphans' tears,
 Will not be drawn.—
 Ha ! what are these ? Sure, hangmen
 That come to bind my hands, and then to drag me
 Before the judgment-seat.—Now, they are new shapes,
 And do appear like Furies, with steel whips
 To scourge my ulcerous soul. Shall I then fall
 Ingloriously, and yield ? No ; spite of fate,
 I will be forc'd to hell like to myself ?
 Though you were legions of accursed spirits,
 Thus would I fly among you.—(*He rushes madly
 towards his daughter, and falls exhausted on the
 stage ; the Servants raise him up, he recovers,
 looks wildly around, then sinks into their arms, and
 is carried off ; L.H.*)

Well. What arts didst use to raze out the conveyance ?

Mar. Certain minerals,
 Incorporated in the ink and wax.
 Besides he gave me nothing ; but still fed me
 With hopes and blows.
 If it please your worship
 To call to memory, this mad beast once caus'd me
 To urge you or to hang, or drown, yourself :
 I'll do the like to him, if you command me.

Well. You are a rascal ; and he that dares be false
 To a master, though unjust, will very hardly

Be true to any other. Begone,
 And look not for
 Reward or favour from me, till thou'st learn'd
 To mend thy wicked life. [Exit Marrall, R.H.]

(*Allworth and Margaret advance.*)

Marg. O, my poor father !

Allw. Nay, weep not, dearest ;—though it shew
 your piety,
 What is decreed by heaven, we cannot alter.

Lov. And heaven here gives a precedent to teach us,
 That, when men leave religion, and turn atheists,
 Their own abilities leave them.—Pray you, take com-
 fort ;—(*To Margaret.*)

I will endeavour, you shall be his guardians
 In his distractions ;—And for your land, Wellborn,
 I'll be an umpire
 Between you and this the undoubted heir
 Of Sir Giles Overreach ;—For me, here's the anchor
 That I must fix on. (*To Lady Allworth.*)

Allw. What you shall determine,
 My lord, we will allow of.

Well. 'Tis the language
 That I speak too ; but there is something else,
 Beside the repo-session of my land,
 And payment of my debts, that I must practise :
 I had a reputation, but 'twas lost
 In my loose course ; and until I redeem it
 Some noble way, I am but half made up.
 It is a time of action ; if your lordship
 Will please to confer a company upon me
 In your command, I doubt not, in my service
 To my king and country, but I shall do something
 That may make me right again.

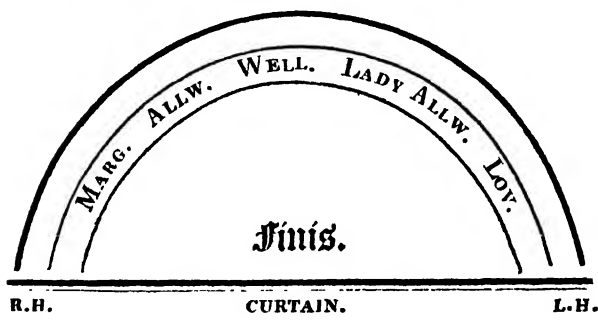
Lov. Your suit is granted,
 And you lov'd for the motion.

Well. Nothing then (*To the audience.*)
 Now wants but your allowance ;—and in that
 Our all is comprehended ; which if you
 Grant willingly, as a fair favour due

To the poet's, and our labours, as you may;
 For we despair not gentlemen, of the play:—
 You may expect, the grace you show to-night,
 Will teach us how to act, our poets how to write.



Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





MRS DAVISON,

A. 1611.

an original. Painted by Halscar in the Possession of J. P. Davison Esq.

Printed by W. S. G. & Co. 10, Market Street, London, W.

~~Oxberry's Edition.~~

THE RIVALS,

A COMEDY;

By R. B. Sheridan.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN, AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE-STREET;
AND C. CHAPPLE, 66, FALL-MALL.

1820.

**Oxberry and Co. Printers,
8, White Hart Yard.**

Remarks.

THE RIVALS.

The RIVALS is one of the most agreeable Comedies we have. In the elegance and brilliancy of the dialogue, in a certain animation of moral sentiment, and in the masterly *denouement* of the fable, the SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL is superior: but the RIVALS has more life and action in it, and abounds in a greater number of whimsical characters, unexpected incidents, and absurd contrasts of situation. The effect of the SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL is something like reading a collection of epigrams; that of the RIVALS is more like reading a novel. In the first you are always at the toilette or in the drawing room; in the last you pass into the open air, and take a turn in King's Mead. The interest is kept alive in the one play by smart repartees, in the other by startling *rencontres*; in the one we laugh at the satirical descriptions of the speakers, in the other the situation of the persons on the stage is irresistibly ludicrous. Thus the interview between *Lucy* and *Sir Lucius O'Trigger*, between *Acres* and his friend *Jack*, who is at once his confidant and his rival, between *Mrs. Malaprop* and the lover of her niece as *Captain Absolute*, and between that young lady and the same person as the pretended *Ensign Beverley*, tell from the mere *double-entendre* of the scene, and from the ignorance of the parties of one another's persons and designs. There is no source of dramatic effect more complete than this species of practical satire, (in which our author seems to have been an adept,) where one character in the piece is made a fool of and turned into ridicule to his face, by the very person whom he is trying to overreach.

There is scarcely a more delightful play than the Rivals when it is well acted, or one that goes off more indifferently, when it is not. The humour is of so broad and farcical a kind, that if not thoroughly

entered into and carried off by the tone and manner of the performer, it fails of effect from its obtrusiveness, and becomes flat from eccentricity. The absurdities brought forward are of that artificial, affected, and preposterous description, that we in some measure require to have the evidence of our senses, to see the persons themselves "jetting under the advanced plumes of their folly," before we can entirely believe in their existence, or derive pleasure from their exposure. If the extravagance of the poet's conception is not supported by the downright reality of the representation, our credulity is staggered and falls to the ground.

For instance, *Acres* should be as odd a compound in external appearance, as he is of the author's brain. He must look like a very notable mixture of the lively coxcomb and the blundering blockhead, to reconcile us to his continued impertinence and senseless flippancy. *Acres* is a mere conventional character, a gay, fluttering automaton, constructed upon mechanical principles, and pushed as it were by the logic of wit and a strict keeping in the pursuit of the ridiculous into follies and fopperies which his natural thoughtlessness would never have dreamt of. *Acres* does not say or do what such a half witted young gentleman would say or do of his own head, but what he might be led to do or say with such a prompter as SHERIDAN at his elbow to tutor him in absurdity, to make a butt of him first, and laugh at him afterwards. Thus, his presence of mind in persisting in his allegorical swearing, "Odds triggers and flints," in the duel scene when he is trembling all over with cowardice, is quite out of character, but it keeps up the preconcerted jest. In proportion therefore as the author has overdone the part, it calls for a greater effort of animal spirits and a peculiar aptitude of genius in the actor to go through with it, to humour the extravagance, and to seem to take a real and cordial delight in caricaturing himself. DODD was the only actor we remember who realised this ideal combination of volatility and phlegm, of slowness of understanding with levity of purpose, of vacancy of thought and vivacity of gesture. *Acres's* affected phrases and apish manners used to sit upon this inimitable actor with the same sort of bumpkin grace and conscious self-complacency as the new cut of his clothes. In general, this character is made little of on the stage: and, when left to shift for itself, seems as vapid as it is forced.

Mrs. Malaprop is another portrait of the same overcharged description. The chief drollery of this extraordinary personage consists in her unaccountable and systematic misapplication of hard words. How she should know the words, and not their meaning, is a little odd. In reading the play, we are amused with such a series of ridiculous blunders, just as we are with a series of puns or cross readings. But to keep up the farce upon the stage, besides "a nice derangement of epitaphs," the imagination must have the assistance of a stately array of grave pretensions and a most formidable establishment of countenance, with all the vulgar self-sufficiency of pride and ignorance, before it can give full credit to this learned tissue of technical absurdity.

As to *Miss Lydia Languish*, she is not easily done to the life. She is a delightful compound of extravagance and *naivete*. She is fond and froward, practical and chimerical, hot and cold in a breath. She is that kind of fruit that drops into the mouth before it is ripe. She must have a husband, but she will not have one without an elopement. This young lady is at an age and of a disposition to throw herself into the arms of the first handsome young fellow she meets; but she repents and grows sullen, like a spoiled child, when she finds that no body hinders her. She should have all the physiognomical marks of a true boarding-school, novel-reading Miss about her, and some others into the bargain. *Sir Anthony's* description hardly comes up to the truth. She should have large rolling eyes, pouting disdainful lips, a pale clear complexion, an oval chin, an arching neck, and a profusion of dark ringlets falling down upon it—or she will never answer to our idea of the charming sentimental hoyden, who is the heroine of the play.

Faulkland is a refined study of a very common disagreeable character, actuated by an unceasing spirit of contradiction;—who perversely seizes every idle pretext for making himself and others miserable, a querulous enthusiast, determined on disappointment; and enamoured with suspicion. He is without excuse; nor is it without some difficulty that we endure his self-tormenting follies, through our partiality for *Julia*, the amiable, unresisting victim of his gloomy caprice.

Sir Anthony Absolute and his son are the most sterling characters

of the play. The tetchy, positive, impatient, overbearing, but warm and generous character of the one, and the gallant determined spirit, adroit address, and dry humour of the other, are admirably set off against each other. The two scenes in which they contend about the proposed match, in the first of which the indignant lover is as choleric and rash as the old gentleman is furious and obstinate, and in the latter of which the son affects such a cool indifference and dutiful submission to his father, from having found out that it is the mistress of his choice whom he is to be compelled to marry, are masterpieces both of wit, humour, and character. *Sir Anthony Absolute* is an evident copy after SMOLLETT's kind-hearted, high-spirited *Matthew Bramble*, as *Mrs. Malaprop* is after the redoubted linguist, *Mrs. Tabitha Bramble*: and indeed, the whole tone, as well as the local scenery of the *RIVALS*, reminds the reader of HUMPHREY CLINKER. SHERIDAN had a right to borrow; and he made use of this privilege, not sparingly, both in this and his other plays. His *Acres*, as well in the general character as in particular scenes, is a *mannered* imitation of *Sir Andrew Aguc-cheek*.

Fag, *Lucy*, and *Sir Lucius O'Trigger*, though subordinate agents in the plot of the *RIVALS*, are not the less amusing on that account. *Fag* wears his master's wit, as he does his lace, at second hand; *Lucy* is an edifying specimen of simplicity in a chamber-maid, and *Sir Lucius* is an honest fortune-hunting Hibernian, who means well to himself, and no harm to any body else. They are also traditional characters, common to the stage, but they are drawn with all the life and spirit of originals.

This appears indeed to have been the peculiar forte and the great praise of our author's genius, that he could imitate with the spirit of an inventor. There is hardly a character, we believe, or a marked situation in any of his works, of which there are not distinct traces to be found in his predecessors. But though the ground-work and texture of his materials was little more than what he found already existing in the models of acknowledged excellence, yet he constantly varied or improved upon their suggestions with masterly skill and ingenuity. He applied what he thus borrowed, with sparkling effect and rare felicity, to different circumstances, and adapted it with peculiar elegance to the prevailing taste of the age. He was the farthest possible

from a servile plagiarist. He wrote in imitation of CONGREVE, VANBRUGH, or WYCHERLEY, as those persons would have written in continuation of themselves, had they lived at the same time with him. There is no excellence of former writers of which he has not availed himself, and which he has not converted to his own purposes, with equal spirit and success. He had great acuteness and knowledge of the world; and if he did not create his own characters, he compared them with their prototypes in nature, and understood their bearings and qualities, before he undertook to make a different use of them. He had wit, fancy, sentiment at command, enabling him to place the thoughts of others in new lights of his own, which reflected back an added lustre on the originals:—whatever he touched, he adorned with all the ease, grace, and brilliancy of style. If he ranks only as a man of second-rate genius, he was assuredly a man of first-rate talents. He was the most classical and the most popular dramatic writer of his age. The works he has left behind him will remain as monuments of his fame, for the delight and instruction of posterity.

MR. SHERIDAN not only excelled as a comic writer, but was also an eminent orator, and a disinterested patriot. As a public speaker, he was distinguished by acuteness of observation and pointed wit, more than by impassioned eloquence or powerful and comprehensive reasoning. Considering him with reference to his conversational talents, his merits as a comic writer, and as a political character, he was perhaps the most accomplished person of his time.

—“Take him for all in all,
We shall not look upon his like again.”

Our author was the second son of Mr. THOMAS SHERIDAN, and Mrs. FRANCES SHERIDAN; he was born the latter end of October, 1751, in Dorset-street, Dublin, and baptised on the 4th of November, in the parish church of St. Mary, by the names of RICHARD BRINSLEY, the first after his uncle, and the second after the RIGHT HON. BRINSLEY, LORD LANESBOROUGH. In 1762, he was sent to the school at Harrow. He was Member of Parliament for Westminster, Stafford, and Ilchester, and a Member of the Privy Council.

He died July the 7th, 1816, in the sixty-fifth year of his age; his body lies interred in Westminster Abbey, near the remains of Garrick.

A plain flat stone marks the spot, with the following inscription :

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,

BORN, 1751,

DIED, 7th JULY, 1816.

THIS MARBLE IS THE TRIBUTE OF AN ATTACHED FRIEND,

PETER MOORE.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is two hours and fifty-five minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty-two minutes ; —the second, thirty-five ; —the third, thirty-seven ; —the fourth, thirty-six ; —the fifth, thirty-five. —The half-price commences, at nine o'clock.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.		Left Hand.
S.E.		Second Entrance.
U.E.		Upper Entrance.
M.D.		Middle Door.
D.I.		Door in Flat.
R.H.D.		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.		Left Hand Door.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. WOODWARD AND MR. QUICK.

Enter a SERJEANT at Law, and an ATTORNEY following, and giving a Paper.

Serj. What's here—a vile cramp hand! I cannot see
Without my spectacles. *Att.* He means his fee :

Nay, Mr. Serjeant, good sir, try again. (*Gives money.*)

Serj. The scrawl improves. (*more*) O come, 'tis pretty plain.

Hey! how's this?—*Dibble!*—sure it cannot be!

A Poet's Brief! A Poet and a Fee!

Att. Yea sir!—tho' *you* without reward, I know,
Would gladly plead the muses cause—(*Serj.*) So—So!

Att. And if the Fee offends—your wrath should fall
On me—(*Serj.*) Dear *Dibble* no offence at all—

Att. Some sons of Phœbus—in the courts we meet,

Serj. And fifty sons of Phœbus in the Fleet!

Att. Nor pleads he worse, who with a decent sprig
Of bays—adorns his legal waste of wig.

Serj. Full-bottom'd heroes thus, on signs unfurl
A leaf of laurel—in a grove of curl!

Yet tell your client, that, in adverse days,
This wig is warmer than a bush of bays.

Att. Do you then, sir, my client's place supply,
Profuse of robe, and prodigal of tye—

Do you, with all those blushing pow'rs of face,

And wonted bashful hesitating grace,

Rise in the court, and flourish on the case.

[*Exit.*

Serj. For practice then suppose—this brief will show it,——

Me, Serjeant *Woodward*,—Counsel for the poet.

Us'd to the ground—I know 'tis hard to deal

With this dread *Court*, from whence there's *no appeal*;

No *Tricking* here, to blunt the edge of *Law*,

Or damn'd in *Equity*—escape by *Flaw*;

But *Judgment* given—*your Sentence* must remain;

—No *Writ of Error* lies—to *Drury-lane*!

Yet when so kind you seem—'tis past dispute
We gain some favour, if not *costs of suit*.
No spleen is here ! I see no hoarded fury ;
—I think I never fac'd a milder jury !
Sad else our plight !—where frowns are transportation,
A hiss, the gallows,—and a groan, damnation !
But such the public candour, without fear
My client waves all *right of challenge* here.
No newsman from *our* session is dismiss'd,
Nor wit nor critic *we* scratch off the list ;
His faults can never hurt another's ease,
His crime at worst—a *bad attempt* to please :
Thus, all respecting, he appeals to all,
And by the general voice will *stand or fall*.

Costume.

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Light blue cloth suit, lined with crimson silk, and gold buttons. A brown great coat, black silk plush cuffs and collar, and gold vellum button holes; cocked hat, gold loop and cockade; white silk stockings, square-toed shoes, and paste buckles.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Scarlet regimental full dress coat, white breeches, silk stockings, and cocked hat.

SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Fashionable blue dress coat, lined with buff silk and gilt buttons; white waistcoat, black silk breeches and stockings, and cocked hat.

FAULKLAND.

Full dress black coat, black breeches, and white waistcoat.

ACRES.

First dress.—Dark riding frock, buff waistcoat, and white cord breeches.—Second dress.—An orange cloth coat, white waistcoat, with a scarlet satin under; buff stocking pantaloons, trimmed with light blue braid, white silk stockings, and cocked hat.

FAG.

Dark livery frock, buff waistcoat and breeches, glazed hat, with cockade, silver band, and top boots.

DAVID.

Sky blue coat, red vest, leather breeches, striped stockings, shoes and buckles, red wig, and white neckcloth.

COACHMAN.

Yellow livery.

JULIA.

First dress.—White leno, and ditto scarf, trimmed with lace.—Second dress.—White satin. Black ornaments may be worn.

LYDIA LANGUISH.

White crape frock, festooned up at the bottom, with white silk cord and tassels.

MRS. MALAPROP.

Green satin dress, trimmed with white lace and satin ribbon.

LUCY.

Smart coloured gown, and leno apron trimmed with ribbon.

Persons Represented.

As originally acted at Covent Garden.

<i>Sir Anthony Absolute</i>	Mr. Shuter.
<i>Captain Absolute</i>	Mr. Woodward.
<i>Sir Lucius O'Trigger</i>	{ Mr. Lee.
	{ Mr. Clinch.
<i>Faulkland</i>	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Acres</i>	Mr. Quick.
<i>Fag</i>	Mr. Lee Lewis.
<i>David</i>	Mr. Dunstall.
<i>Coachman</i>	Mr. Fearon.
<i>Mrs. Malaprop</i>	Mrs. Green.
<i>Lydia Languish</i>	Miss Barsanti.
<i>Julia</i>	Mrs. Bulkley.
<i>Lucy</i>	Mrs. Lessingham.

	1817.	1820.
	<i>Drury Lane.</i>	<i>Covent Garden.</i>
<i>Sir Anthony Absolute</i>	Mr. Dowton.	Mr. W. Farren.
<i>Captain Absolute</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. C. Kemble.
<i>Sir Lucius O'Trigger</i>	Mr. Johnstone.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Faulkland</i>	Mr. S. Penley.	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Acres</i>	Mr. Harley.	Mr. Liston.
<i>Fag</i>	Mr. Kent.	Mr. Farley.
<i>David</i>	Mr. Knight.	Mr. Emery.
<i>James</i>	Mr. Buxton.	Mr. Healy.
<i>Coachman</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Atkins.
<i>Servants</i>	{ Mr. J. West.	Mr. Penn.
	{ Mr. Evans.	Mr. Truman.
<i>Mrs. Malaprop</i>	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Davenport.
<i>Lydia Languish</i>	Mrs. Mardyn.	Miss Brunton.
<i>Julia</i>	Mrs. Davison.	Mrs. Davison.
<i>Lucy</i>	Mrs. Harlowe.	Mrs. Gibbs.
<i>Jenny</i>	Mrs. Chatterley.	Miss Shaw.

SCENE—*In Bath.*

Time of Action within one Day.

THE RIVALS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street at Bath.*

COACHMAN *crosses the Stage from L.H. to R.H.*

Enter FAG, L.H. looking after him.

Fag. What! Thomas;—Sure, 'tis he!—What, Thomas! Thomas!

Coach. Hey? odds life!—Mr. Fag! give us your hand, my old fellow-servant!

Fag. Excuse my glove, Thomas; I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad! why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty!—but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath?

Coach. Sure, master, madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postillion be all come.

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Ay: master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit, so he'd a mind to gi't the slip—and whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Ay, ay; hasty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute.

Coach. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young master? Odd, Sir Anthony will stare to see the captain here!

Fag. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

Coach. Why, sure!

Fag. At present, I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

Coach. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Coach. No! why, didn't you say you had left young master?

Fag. No.—Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no further;—briefly then—Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

Coach. The devil they are: do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning on't.

Fag. You'll be secret, Thomas.

Coach. As a coach horse.

Fag. Why, then the cause of all this is love,—love, Thomas, who has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

Coach. But, pray, why does your master pass only for ensign?—now, if he had shammed general, indeed—

Fag. Ah, Thomas! there lays the mystery o'the matter!—Hark ye, Thomas, my master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste—a lady, who likes him better as a half-pay ensign, than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet of three thousand a year.

Coach. That is an odd taste indeed! but has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? is she rich, eh?

Fag. Rich! why, I believe she owns half the stocks!—Z—s, Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easily as I could my washerwoman!—She has a lapdog that eats out of gold—she feeds her parrot with small pearls, and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

Coach. Bravo, 'faith!—Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands at least; but does she draw kindly with the captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miss Lydia Languish;—but there is an old

tough aunt in the way—though, by the bye, she has never seen my master—for he got acquainted with miss while on a visit in Gloucestershire.

Coach. Well, I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony. But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath? I ha' heard a great deal of it;—here's a mort o'merry making, eh?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge—but damn the place, I'm tired of it; their regular hours stupify me—not a fiddle or a card after eleven! however, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties;—I'll introduce you there, Thomas, you'll like him much.—(*Crosses to R.H.*)—But, Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed, you must:—Here, now, this wig! what the devil do you with a wig, Thomas? none of the London whips, of any degree of ton, wear wigs now.

Coach. More's the pity, more's the pity, I say—Odds life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next. Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the bar, I guessed 'twould mount to the box! but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag: and look ye, I'll never give up mine, the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that. But hold, mark—mark, Thomas.

Coach. Zooks, 'tis the captain! Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No, no, that is madam Lucy, my master's mistress' maid; they lodge at that house—but I must after him, to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd, he's giving her money!—Well, Mr. Fag—
(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Fag. Good bye, Thomas; I have an appointment in Gyde's porch, this evening, at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party.

[*Exeunt; Thomas, R.H. Fag, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Dressing-Room in Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.*

LYDIA LANGUISH *sitting on a Sofa, with a Book in her hand*;—LUCY, *as just returned from a Message, on her L.H.*

Lucy. Indeed, ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it: I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

Lyd. And could not you get "The Reward of Constancy?"

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "The Fatal Connexion?"

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "The Mistakes of the Heart?"

Lucy. Ma'am, as ill luck would have it, Mr. Bull said, Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

Lyd. Heigho! Did you inquire for "The Delicate Distress?"

Lucy. Or, "The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?" Yes, indeed, ma'am, I asked every where for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slatthern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'n't fit for a Christian to read.

Lyd. Heigho! Yes, I always know when Lady Slatthern has been before me: she has a most observing thumb, and, I believe, cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes. Well, child, what have you brought me?

Lucy. Oh, here, ma'am! (*Taking Books from under her Cloak, and from her Pockets.*)—This is "The Man of Feeling," and this, "Peregrine Pickle."—Here are "The Tears of Sensibility," and "Humphrey Clinker."

Lyd. Hold! here's some one coming—quick, see who it is—[*Exit Lucy, L.H.*]—Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice!

Enter LUCY, L.H.

Lucy. Lud, ma'am! here is Miss Melville!

Lyd. Is it possible! [*Exit Lucy*, L.H.]

Enter JULIA, L.H.

Lyd. My dearest Julia, how delighted am I!—(*They embrace.*)—How unexpected was this happiness!

Jul. True, Lydia, and our pleasure is the greater; but what has been the matter? you were denied to me at first.

Lyd. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you! but first inform me what has conjured you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

Jul. He is; we are arrived within this hour, and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

Lyd. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress; I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, though your prudence may condemn me: my letters have informed you of my whole connexion with Beverley; but I have lost him, Julia;—my aunt has discovered our intercourse, by a note she intercepted, and has confined me ever since: Yet would you believe it? she has fallen absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet, she met one night, since we have been here, at Lady Macshuffle's rout.

Jul. You jest, Lydia.

Lyd. No, upon my word:—She really carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chooses to be known to him;—but it is a Delia, or a Celia, I assure you.

Jul. Then, surely, she is now more indulgent to her niece?

Lyd. Quite the contrary:—since she has discovered her own frailty, she is become more suspicious of mine. —Then I must inform you of another plague; that odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day, so that, I protest, I shall be teased out of all spirits!

Jul. Come, come, Lydia, hope for the best:—Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

THE RIVALS.

Lyd. But you have not heard the worst:—Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley, just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

Jul. What was his offence?

Lyd. Nothing at all; but I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel; and, somehow, I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity; so, last Thursday, I wrote a letter to myself, 'to inform myself that Beverley was, at that time paying his addresses to another woman.—I signed it, "Your friend unknown," showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vow'd I'd never see him more.

Jul. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

Lyd. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out; I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever.

Jul. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so. Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign, —and you have thirty thousand pounds!

Lyd. But, you know I lose most of my fortune, if I marry, without my aunt's consent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty; nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

Jul. Nay, this is caprice!

Lyd. What, does Julia tax me with caprice? I thought her lover Faulkland had inured her to it.

Jul. I do not love even his faults.

Lyd. But apropos! you have sent to him, I suppose?

Jul. Not yet, upon my word! nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath:—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden I could not inform him of it.

Lyd. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress, though under the protection of Sir Anthony; yet have you, for this long year, been a slave to the caprice, the

whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Jul. Nay, you are wrong entirely:—We were contracted before my father's death: That, and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish:—He is too generous to trifle on such a point;—and, for his character, you wrong him there too.—No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble, to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness. Unused to the fopperies of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover; but, being unhacknied in the passion, his affection is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every thought and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his.—Yet, though his pride calls for this full return—his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him, which would entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be loved to the degree he wishes, he still suspects that he is not loved enough.—This temper, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardour of his attachment.

Lyd. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him; but, tell me candidly, Julia—had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are? Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

Jul. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet, surely, that alone were an obligation sufficient——

Lyd. Obligation! why, a water spaniel would have done as much! Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!—What's here?

Enter Lucy, in a hurry, L.H.

Lucy. O ma'm, here is Sir Anthony Absolute, just come home with your aunt!

Lyd. They'll not come here :—Lucy, do you watch.

[*Exit Lucy, L.H.*]

Jul. Yet I must go ; Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me, as long as she chooses, with her select words, so ingeniously misapplied, without being mispronounced.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Enter LUCY, L.H.

Lucy. O lud, ma'am ! They are both coming upstairs !

Lyd. Well I'll not detain you.—Adieu, my dear Julia ! I'm sure you are in haste to send to Faulkland.—There—through my room you'll find another staircase.

Jul. Adieu !

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Lyd. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books.—Quick, quick.—Fling 'Peregrine Pickle' under the toilet—throw 'Roderick Random' into the closet—put 'The Innocent Adultery' into 'The Whole Duty of Man'—thrust 'Lord Aimworth' under the sofa—cram 'Ovid' behind the bolster—there—put 'The Man of Feeling' into your pocket.—Now for them !

[*Exit Lucy, L.H.*]

*Enter MRS. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY
ABSOLUTE, L.H.*

Mrs. M. There, Sir Anthony, there stands the deliberate simpleton, who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

Lyd. Madam, I thought you once—

Mrs. M. You thought, miss ! I don't know any business you have to think at all : thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is, that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, from your memory.

Lyd. Ah, madam ! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. M. But I say it is, miss ! there is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor

dear uncle, as if he had never existed ; and I thought it my duty so to do ; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

Sir Anth. Why, sure, she won't pretend to remember what she's ordered not ! aye this comes of her reading !

Lyd. What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus ?

Mrs. M. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter ; you know I have proof controvertible of it. But, tell me, will you promise me to do as you're bid ? Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing ?

Lyd. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that, had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. M. What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion ? They don't become a young woman ; and you ought to know, that, as both always wear off, 'tis safest, in matrimony, to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle, before marriage, as if he'd been a black-a-moor ; and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made ! and, when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed ! But, suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley ?

Lyd. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. M. Take yourself to your room. You are fit company for nothing but your own ill humours.

Lyd. Willingly, ma'am ; I cannot change for the worse.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Mrs. M. There's a little intricate hussy for you !

Sir Anth. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am ; all that is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. In my way hither, Mrs Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library ; she had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers : from that

moment, I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress !

Mrs. M. Those are vile places, indeed !

Sir Anth. Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge!—It blossoms through the year ! And, depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. M. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony ; you surely speak laconically.

Sir Anth. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know ?

Mrs. M. Observe me, Sir Anthony—I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning ; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman ;—for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning ; nor will it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments ; but, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts ; and, as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know ; and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir Anth. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you : though I must confess, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question.—But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate,—you say you have no objection to my proposal ?

Mrs. M. None, I assure you.—I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres : and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

Sir Anth. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly.—He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

Mrs. M. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

Sir Anth. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop; Jack knows, that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in his younger days, 'twas, 'Jack, do this,'—if he demurred, I knocked him down; and, if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

Mrs. M. Ay, and the properest way, o' my conscience!—Nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invitations; and I hope you will represent her to the captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir Anth. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently. Well, I must leave you; and, let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl—take my advice, keep a tight hand—if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and, if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Mrs. M. Well, at any rate, I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition,—she has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Sure, Lucy can't have betrayed me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton, I should have made her confess it.—Lucy! Lucy! (*Calls*) Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter LUCY, R.H.

Lucy. Did you call, ma'am?

Mrs. M. Yes, girl.—Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

THE RIVALS.

Mrs. M. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned—

Lucy. O gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out!

Mrs. M. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on.

Lucy. No, ma'am.

Mrs. M. So, come to me persently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius—(*Crosses to R.H.*) but mind, Lucy, if ever you betray what you are intrusted with (unless it be other people's secrets to me), you forfeit my malevolence for ever: and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! So, my dear simplicity, let me give you a little respite; (*Altering her manner*) let girls, in my station, be as fond as they please of being expert and knowing in their trusts, commend me to a mask of silliness, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account have I turned my simplicity lately: (*Looks at a paper*)—*For abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign! in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve—gowns, five; hats, ruffles, caps, &c. &c. numberless.—From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half.—About a quarter's pay!—Item, from Mrs. Maluprop, for betraying the young people to her—when I found matters were likely to be discovered,—two guineas and a French shawl.—Item, from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters—which I never delivered,—two guineas and a pair of buckles.—Item, from Sir Lucius O'Trigger, three crowns, two gold pocket pieces, and a silver snuff-box!—Well done, simplicity! yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe, that he was corresponding, not with the aunt, but with the niece; for, though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune.* [*Exit, L.H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Captain Absolute's Lodgings.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE and FAG, R.H.

Fag. Sir, while I was there, sir Anthony came in ; I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

Capt. A. And what did he say on hearing I was at Bath ?

Fag. Sir, in my life, I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished !

Capt. A. Well, sir, and what did you say ?

Fag. O, I lied, sir—I forgot the precise lie, but, you may depend on't, he got no truth from me.—Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what has brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently.—Sir Anthony's servants were curious, sir, very curious indeed.

Capt. A. You have said nothing to them ?—

Fag. O, not a word, sir—not a word.—Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)—

Capt. A. 'Sdeath !—you rascal ! you have not trusted him ?

Fag. Oh, no, sir,—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity !—He was, indeed, a little inquisitive ; but I was sly, sir—devilish sly !—My master (said I) honest Thomas (you know, sir, one says honest to one's inferiors) is come to Bath to recruit—yes, sir—I said to recruit—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, sir, is nothing to him, nor any one else.

Capt. A. Well—recruit will do,—let it be so—

Fag. Oh, sir, recruit will do surprisingly ;—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas, that your honour had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen, seven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard markers.

Capt. A. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

Fag. I beg pardon, sir—I beg pardon.—But, with submission, a lie is nothing unless one supports it.—Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge endorsements as well as the bill.

Capt. A. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit by offering too much security. Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, sir, changing his dress.

Capt. A. Can you tell whether he has been informed of sir Anthony's and miss Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, sir; he has seen no one since he came in, but his gentleman, who was with him at Bristol.—I think, sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down——

Capt. A. Go, tell him I am here. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Fag. Yes, sir—(*Going.*) I beg pardon, sir, but should sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember that we are recruiting, if you please.

Capt. A. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderness to my character, if your honour could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I shall esteem it as an obligation;—for though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it hurts one's conscience to be found out. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Capt. A. Now for my whimsical friend:—If he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him——

Enter FAG, L.H.D.

Fag. Mr. Faulkland, sir.

[*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Re-enter Fag L.H.D. introduces Mr. FAULKLAND, and Exit, R.H.

Capt. A. Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again: you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news

since I left you? How stand matters between you and Lydia?

Capt. A. 'Faith, much as they were.

Faulk. Nay, then, you trifle too long—if you are sure of her, propose to the aunt, in your own character, and write to sir Anthony for his consent.

Capt. A. Softly, softly, for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side.—Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

Faulk. Indeed, I cannot; I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

Capt. A. By heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man.

Faulk. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not like mine, fixed immutably on one only object. You throw for a large stake, but, losing—you could stake and throw again;—but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stripped of all.

Capt. A. But, for heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present?

Faulk. What grounds for apprehension, did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand? I fear for her spirits—her health—her life—O! Jack, when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement of the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

Capt. A. Ay, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or not.—So then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia were well, and in spirits, you would be entirely content?

Faulk. I should be happy beyond measure—I am anxious only for that.

Capt. A. Then cure your anxiety at once—Miss

THE RIVALS.

Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

Capt. A. She is arrived here with my father, within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be serious?

Capt. A. I thought you knew sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously then, it is as I tell you—upon my honour.

Faulk. My dear Jack—now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.

Enter FAG, R.H.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres, just arrived, is below.

Capt. A. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her. Fag, show the gentleman up. *[Exit Fag, R.H.]*

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Capt. A. Oh, very intimate; he is likewise a rival of mine—that is, of my other self's, for he does not think his friend, captain Absolute, ever saw the lady in question;—and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of one Beverley, a concealed, skulking rival, who—

Faulk. Hush!—He's here!

Enter ACRES, R.H.

Acres. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how dost thou? just arrived, 'faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant. Warm work on the roads, Jack—odds whips and wheels! I've travelled like a comet, with a tail of dust all the way as long as the Mall.

Capt. A. Ah! Boh, you are indeed an eccentric planet, but we know your attraction hither—give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you:

(*Crosses to centre.*) sir, I solicit your connexions.—Hey, Jack—what this is Mr. Faulkland, who——

Capt. A. Ay, Bob, miss Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

Acres. Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man!

Faulk. I have not seen miss Melville yet, sir,—I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire?

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, sir,—never better.—Odds blushes and blooms! she has been as healthy as the German spa.

Faulk. Indeed!—I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

Acres. False, false, sir—only said to vex you: quite the reverse, I assure you. (*Retires up the stage.*)

Faulk. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

Capt. A. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick.

Faulk. No, no, you misunderstand me:—yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love.—Now confess—isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

Capt. A. Oh, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure!

Acres. Good apartments, Jack. (*Advancing.*)

Faulk. Well, sir, but you was saying that miss Melville has been so exceedingly well—what then she has been merry and gay I suppose?—always in spirits, hey?

Acres. Merry! odds crickets! she has been the belle and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining! so full of wit and humour!

(*Retires up the stage.*)

Faulk. By my soul! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome!—What! happy, and I away!

Capt. A. Just now, you were only apprehensive for your mistress's spirits.

Faulk. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company?

Capt. A. No, indeed, you have not.

Faulk. Have I been lively and entertaining?

Capt. A. Oh, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faulk. Have I been full of wit and humour?

Capt. A. No, 'faith, to do you justice, you have been confoundedly stupid, indeed.

Acres. (*On R.H.*) What's the matter with the gentleman?

Capt. A. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

Faulk. Yes, yes, she has a happy disposition!

Acres. (*Crosses to centre.*) That she has, indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp, squallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—there was this time month—odds minnums and crotchets! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert! (*Sings.*) *My heart's my own, my will is free.* That's very like her. (*Turns up the stage.*)

Faulk. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happiness on such a trifle! 'Sdeath! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to sooth her light heart with catches and glees!—What can you say to this, sir?

Capt. A. Why that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, sir.

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—but she has been dancing too, I doubt not?

Acres. (*In the centre.*) What does the gentleman say about dancing?

Capt. A. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

Acres. Ay, truly does she—there was at our last race ball.—

Faulk. Hell and the devil! (*Acres starts away to R.H.*) There! there—I told you so! I told you so! oh! she thrives in my absence!—Dancing!

Capt. A. For heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't ex-

pose yourself so!—Suppose she has danced, what then?—does not the ceremony of society often oblige—

Faulk.—Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as you say—for form's sake. (*Crosses to centre.*) I say Mr.—Mr.—What's his d—d name?

Capt. A. Acres, Acres.

Faulk. O ay, Mr. Acres, you were praising miss Melville's manner of dancing a minuet—hey?

Acres. Oh, I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of, was her country dancing:—odds swimmings! she has such an air with her!

Faulk. Now, disappointment on her!—defend this, Absolute! why don't you defend this?—country dances? jigs and reels! am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say, I should not have regarded a minuet—but country dances! Z——ds, had she made one in a cotillion—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous palming puppies!—to show paces, like a managed filly!—Oh, Jack, there never can be but one man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a country dance; and, even then, the rest of the couples should be her great uncles and aunts! (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Capt. A. Ay, to be sure! grandfathers and grandmothers!

Faulk. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, it will spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain!—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it.

(*Going.*)

Capt. A. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faulk. D—n his news! [*Exit, L.H.*]

Capt. A. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland! Five

minutes since—‘nothing on earth could give him a moment’s uneasiness!’

Acres. The gentleman wasn’t angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

Capt. A. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You don’t say so? Ha! ha! jealous of me!—that’s a good joke!

Capt. A. There’s nothing strange in that, Rob; let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

Acres. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! mischief—ha! ha! but you know I am not my own property! my dear Lydia has forstalled me. She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but, odds frogs and tambours! I sha’n’t take matters so here—now ancient madam has no voice in it—I’ll make my old clothes know who’s master—I shall strait-way cashier the hunting-frock, and render my leather breeches incapable—My hair has been in training some time.

Capt. A. Indeed!

Acres. Ay—and tho’ff the side curls are a little restive, my hind part takes it very kindly.

Capt. A. Oh, you’ll polish, I doubt not.

Acres. Absolutely I propose so—then, if I can find out this ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I’ll make him know the difference o’t.

Capt. A. Spoke like a man—but, pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing—

Acres. Ha! ha! you’ve taken notice of it—’tis genteel, isn’t it?—I didn’t invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia, a great scholar, I assure you, says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable; because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, by Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the sentiment;—so that to swear with

propriety, says my little major, the "oath should be an echo to the sense;" and this we call the oath referential, or sentimental swearing—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

Capt. A. Very genteel, and very new indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Ay, ay, the best terms will grow obsolete—Damns have had their day.

Enter FAG, R.H.D.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you—Shall I show him into the parlour?

Capt. A. Ay—you may.

Acres. Well, I must be gone—

Capt. A. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, sir.

Capt. A. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly?

[*Exit Fag, R.H.D.*]

Acres. You have business with Sir Anthony.—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop, at my lodgings. I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.—Adieu, Jack, we must meet at night, when you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Capt. A. That I will, with all my heart. Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter SIR ANTHONY, R.H.D.

Sir, I am delighted to see you here, and looking so well!—your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

Sir Anth. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Capt. A. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

Sir Anth. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it; for I was going to write to you on

a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

Capt. A. Pardon me, I sir, never saw you look more strong and hearty, and I pray fervently that you may continue so.

Sir Anth. I hope your prayers may be heard with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time.—Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

Capt. A. Sir, you are very good.

Sir Anth. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world.—I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Capt. A. Sir, your kindness overpowers me.—Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

Sir Anth. Oh! that shall be as your wife chooses.

Capt. A. My wife, sir!

Sir Anth. Ay, ay, settle that between you—settle that between you.

Capt. A. A wife, sir, did you say?

Sir Anth. Ay, a wife—why, did not I mention her before?

Capt. A. Not a word of her, sir.

Sir Anth. Odd so!—I mustn't forget her though—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife—but I suppose that makes no difference?

Capt. A. Sir! sir! you amaze me!

Sir Anth. Why, what the devil's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

Capt. A. I was sir,—you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir Anth. Why—what difference does that make? Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

Capt. A. Pray, sir, who is the lady?

Sir Anth. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love, and to marry her directly.

Capt. A. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir Anth. I am, sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to object to a lady you know nothing of.

Capt. A. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Hark ye, Jack;—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool,—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itself—when I am not thwarted; no one more easily led—when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

Capt. A. Sir, I must repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Now d—n me! if ever I call you Jack again while I live!

Capt. A. Nay, sir, but hear me.

Sir Anth. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word! so give me your promise by a nod—and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog—if you don't, by—

Capt. A. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness!—

Sir Anth. Z—ds! Sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's Museum—she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—she shall be all this, sirrah!—yet, I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night, to write sonnets on her beauty.

Capt. A. This is reason and moderation indeed!

Sir Anth. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

Capt. A. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humour for mirth in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis false, sir; I know you are laughing in your sleeve; I know you'll grin when I am gone, sirrah!

Capt. A. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir Anth. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence, if you please—It won't do with me, I promise you.

Capt. A. Indeed, sir, I never was cooler in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog—but it won't do.

Capt. A. Nay, sir, upon my word—

Sir Anth. So you will fly out! can't you be cool, like me; What the devil good can passion do?—passion is of no service, you impudent, insolent, overbearing reprobate!—There, you sneer again!—don't provoke me!—but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog! you play upon the meekness of my disposition! Yet, take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last!—but mark!—I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do every thing on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you—If not, z—ds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest.—I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and d—n me! if ever I call you Jack again!

[*Exit, R.H.D.*

Capt. A. Mild, gentle, considerate father! I kiss your hands.

Enter FAG, R.H.D.

Fag. Assuredly, sir, our father is wroth to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time—~~muttering~~ growling, and thumping the banisters all the way; I, and the cook's dog, stand bowing at the

door—rap ! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane ; bids me carry that to my master,—then kicking the poor turnspit into the area, d—ns us all, for a puppy triumvirate !—Upon my credit, sir, were I in your place, and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

Capt. A. Cease your impertinence, sir—did you come in for nothing more?—Stand out of the way.

[*Pushes him aside, and Exit, R.H.D.*]

Fag. So ! sir Anthony trims my master ;—he is afraid to reply to his father, then vents his spleen on poor Fag ! When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another, who happens to come in the way, shows the worst of temper, the basest—

Enter ERRAND BOY, R.H.D.

Boy. Mr. Fag ! Mr. Fag ! your master calls you.

Fag. Well ! you little, dirty puppy, you needn't bawl so—the meanest disposition, the—

Boy. Quick, quick ! Mr. Fag.

Fag. Quick, quick ! you impudent jackanapes ! am I to be commanded by you too, you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen bred— [Kicks him off, R.H.D.]

SCENE II.—*The North Parade.*

Enter LUCY, L.H.

Lucy. So, I shall have another rival to add to my mistress's list—captain Absolute ; however, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received due notice in form. Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his dear Dalia, as he calls her :—I wonder he's not here !

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER, R.H.

Sir L. Hah ! my little ambassadress—upon my con-

science I have been looking for you ; I have been on the South Parade this half hour.

Lucy. (*Speaking simply.*) O gemini ! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

Sir L. 'Faith ! may be, that was the reason we did not meet ; and it is very comical too, how you could go out, and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-house, and I chose the window, on purpose that I might not miss you.

Lucy. My stars ! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

Sir L. Sure enough it must have been so—and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me ?

Lucy. Yes, but I have—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir L. 'Faith ! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed—well—let me see what the dear creature says.

Lucy. There, sir Lucius. (*Gives him a letter.*)

Sir L. (*Reads.*) *Sir—There is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination : such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of sir Lucius O'Trigger. Very pretty, upon my word ! Female punctuation forbids me to say more ; yet let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections. Your's, while meretricious.*

DELIA.

Upon my conscience ! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language ! 'Faith ! she's quite the queen of the dictionary !—for the devil a word dare refuse coming at her call—though one would think it was quite out of hearing.

Lucy. Ay, sir, a lady of her experience.

Sir L. Experience ! what, at seventeen ?

Lucy. O, true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars ! how she will read off hand !

Sir L. 'Faith, she must be very deep read, to write this way—though she is rather an arbitrary writer, too—for here are a great many poor words pressed into the

service of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom. However, when affection guides the pen, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

Lucy. Ah ! sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you !

Sir L. Oh, tell her I'll make her the best husband in the world, and lady O'Trigger into the bargain !—But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent—and do every thing fairly.

Lucy. Nay, sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice.

Sir L. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it :—I am so poor, that I can't afford to do a dirty action.—If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure.—However, my pretty girl, (*Gives her money*) here's a little something to buy you a ribband ; and meet me in the evening, and I will give you an answer to this. So, hussy, take a kiss beforehand, to put you in mind.
(*Kisses her.*)

Lucy. O Lud ! sir Lucius—I never see such a gemman ! My lady wont like you if you're so impudent.

Sir L. Faith she will, Lucy—thatsame—pho ! what's the name of it ?—modesty !—is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked : so, if your mistress asks you whether sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her fifty, my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie ?

Sir L. Ah then, you baggage ! I'll make it a truth presently.

Lucy. For shame now ; here is some one coming.

Sir L. O'faith I'll quiet your conscience !

[*Sees Fag. Exit, humming a tune, R.H.*]

Enter Fag, L.H.S.B.

Fag. So, so, ma'am. I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. O lud !—now, Mr. Fag—you flurry one so !

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more since—

city, if you please—You play false with us, madam—I saw you give the baronet a letter.—My master shall know this—and if he don't call him out—I will.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty!—That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton.—She is taken with sir Lucius's address.

Fag. How! what taste some people have! Why I suppose I have walked by her window an hundred times. (*Crosses to L.H.*)—But what says our young lady?—any message to my master?

Lucy. Sad news, Mr. Fag? A worse rival than Acres? Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

Fag. What, captain Absolute?

Lucy. Even so. I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha! very good, 'faith! Good b'ye, Lucy, I must away with this news. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Lucy. Well, you may laugh, but it is true, I assure you. (*Going L.H.*) But, Mr. Fag, tell your master not to be cast down by this.

Fag. Oh, he'll be so disconsolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

Fag. Never fear—never fear!

Lucy. Be sure, bid him keep up his spirits.

Fag. We will—we will.

[*Exeunt, Fag, R.H. Lucy, L.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The North Parade.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, L.H.

Capt. A. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed!—Whimsical enough, 'faith! My father wants to force me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with!

He must not know of my connexion with her yet awhile. He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters ; however, I'll read my recantation instantly. My conversion is something sudden, indeed ; but, I can assure him, it is very sincere.—So, so, here he comes—he looks plaguy gruff! (*Steps aside, R.H.*)

Enter SIR ANTHONY, R.H.

Sir Anth. No—I'll die sooner than forgive him ! Die, did I say ? I'll live these fifty years to plague him. At our last meeting, his impudence had almost put me out of temper—an obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy ! Who can he take after ? 'This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters ! for putting him at twelve years old, into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a year, besides his pay, ever since ! But I have done with him—he's any body's son for me—I never will see him more—never—never—never—never.

Capt. A. Now for a penitential face !

(*Comes down, L.H.*)

Sir Anth. Fellow, get out of my way !

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Capt. A. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

Sir Anth. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

Capt. A. A sincere penitent. I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

Sir Anth. What's that ?

Capt. A. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and considering on your past goodness, and kindness, and condescension to me.

Sir Anth. Well, sir ?

Capt. A. I have been likewise weighing, and balancing, what you were pleased to mention, concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir Anth. Well, puppy ?

Capt. A. Why, then, sir, the result of my reflections is, a resolution to sacrifice every inclination of my own to your satisfaction.

Sir Anth. Why, now you talk sense, absolute sense ; I never heard anything more sensible in my life. Confound you ! you shall be Jack again.

Capt. A. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir Anth. Why then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented me telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare. What think you of Miss Lydia Languish ?

Capt. A. Languish ! What the Languishes of, Worcestershire ?

Sir Anth. Worcestershire ! no. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop, and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment ?

Capt. A. Malaprop ! Languish ! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet stay, I think I do recollect something—Languish—Languish—She squints, don't she ?—A little red-haired girl ?

Sir Anth. Squints !—A red-haired girl ! Z—ds ! no !

Capt. A. Then I must have forgot ; it can't be the same person.

Sir Anth. Jack ! Jack ! what think you of blooming love-breathing seventeen ?

Capt. A. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent ; if I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

Sir Anth. Nay, but Jack, such eyes ! such eyes ! so innocently wild ! so bashfully irresolute ! Not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love ! Then, Jack, her cheeks ! her cheeks, Jack ! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes ! Then, Jack, her lips ! O, Jack, lips, smiling at their own discretion ! and, if not smiling, more sweetly pouting—more lovely in sullenness ! Then, Jack, her neck ! O, Jack ! Jack !

Capt. A. And which is to be mine, sir, the niece, or the aunt ?

Sir Anth. Why, you unfeeling, insensible puppy,

I despise you. When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket! The aunt indeed! Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched any thing old or ugly to gain an empire.

Capt. A. Not to please your father, sir?

Sir Anth. To please my father——Z——ds! not to please——O, my father——Odso!—yes, yes; if my father, indeed, had desired—that's quite another matter, —'Though he wasn't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Capt. A. I dare say not, sir?

Sir Anth. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

Capt. A. Sir, I repeat it, if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind—now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and, though one eye may be very agreeable, yet, as the prejudice has always run in favour of two, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

Sir Anth. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you are an anchorite! A vile insensible stock! You a soldier! you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on? Odds life, I've a great mind to marry the girl myself? *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Capt. A. I am entirely at your disposal, sir; if you should think of addressing miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the aunt; or if you should change your mind, and take the old lady,—'tis the same to me, I'll marry the niece.

Sir Anth. Upon my word, Jack, thou art either a very great hypocrite, or—but, come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie—I'm sure it must—come now, d—n your demure face; come, confess, Jack, you have been lying—ha'nt you? You have

been playing the hypocrite, hey?—I'll never forgive you, if you ha'nt been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Capt. A. I'm sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

Sir Anth. Hang your respect and duty! But, come along with me. (*Crosses to L.H.*) I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly. Her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, 'egad, I'll marry the girl myself! [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Julia's Dressing-room.*

Enter FAULKLAND, L.H.D.

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly: I wonder she is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met! How delicate was the warmth of her expressions!—I was ashamed to appear less happy, though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations: yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so very happy in my absence. She is coming—Yes, I know the nimbleness of her tread, when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter JULIA, R.H.D.

Jul. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome, restrained as we were, by the presence of a third person?

Jul. Oh, Faulkland! when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered something of coolness in your first salutation.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I was rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health: Sure I had no cause for coldness?

Jul. Nay, then, I see you have taken something ill: you must not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well, then, shall I own to you, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was somewhat damped, by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire; on your mirth—your singing—dancing—and I know not what! for such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment, in your absence, as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear, that steals down the cheek of parting lovers, is a compact, that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

Jul. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing, minute caprice? Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh, in your breast, against my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: No, no, I am happy, if you have been so—yet only say that you did not sing with mirth,—say that you thought of Faulkland in the dance.

Jul. I never can be happy in your absence. If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you, when I say, that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodness to me! Oh, I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

Jul. If ever without such cause from you, as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude!

Faulk. Ah, Julia! that last word is grating to me! I would I had no title to your gratitude! Search your

heart, Julia : perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart !

Jul. For what quality must I love you ?

Faulk. For no quality : to regard me for any quality of mind or understanding were only to esteem me ! And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation there for any part of your affection.

Jul. Where nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it as misplaced. I have seen men, who in this vain article, perhaps, might rank above you ; but my heart has never asked my eyes, if it were so or not.

Faulk. Now, this is not well from you, Julia ; I despise person in a man, yet, if you love me as I wish, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none so fair.

Jul. I see you are determined to be unkind—The contract, which my poor father bound us in, gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought or promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love.

Jul. Then try me now—Let us be free as strangers as to what is past : my heart will not feel more liberty.

Faulk. There, now ! so hasty, Julia ! so anxious to be free ! If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loose your hold, even though I wished it !

Jul. Oh, you torture me to the heart ! I cannot bear it !

Faulk. I do not mean to distress you : if I loved you less, I should never give you an uneasy moment. I would not boast, yet let me say, that I have neither age, person, or character, to found dislike on ; my fortune such, as few ladies could be charged with indiscretion in the match. O, Julia ! when love receives such countenance from prudence, nice minds will be suspicious of its birth.

Jul. I know not whither your insinuations would

tend ; but as they seem pressing to insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so—I have given you no cause for this ! [Exit, in tears, R.H.D.]

Faulk. In tears ! stay, Julia—stay but for a moment—The door is fastened ! Julia ! my soul ! but for one moment !—I hear her sobbing ! 'Sdeath ! what a brute am I to use her thus !—Yet stay—Ay, she is coming now : how little resolution there is in woman ! how a few soft words can turn them !—No, Z—ds ! she's not coming, nor don't intend it, I suppose ! This is not steadiness, but obstinacy ! Yet I deserve it. What, after so long an absence, to quarrel with her tenderness ! 'twas barbarous and unmanly !—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated, and when I distress her so again, may I lose her for ever ! [Exit, L.H.]

SCENE III.—*Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.*

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, *with a Letter in her hand*,
CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *following*, L.H.

Mrs. M. Your being Sir Anthony's son, captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation ; but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

Capt. A. Permit me to say, madam, that as I have never yet had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair, at present, is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop, of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

Mrs. M. Sir, you do me infinite honour ! I beg, captain, you'll be seated.—(*Sits.*)—Ah ! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman ! few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman ! Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower of beauty.

Capt. A. It is but too true, indeed, ma'am ; yet I

fear our ladies should share the blame ; they think our admiration of beauty so great, that knowledge, in them, would be superfluous. Thus, like garden trees, they seldom show fruit, till time has robbed them of the more specious blossoms : (*They rise.*) few like Mrs. Malaprop, and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once.

Mrs. M. Sir, you overpower me with good breeding—He is the very pine-apple of politeness ! (*They sit.*) You are not ignorant, captain, that this giddy girl has, somehow, contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eves-dropping ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows any thing of.

Capt. A. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before. I'm not at all prejudiced against her on that account. But it must be very distressing, indeed, to you ma'am.

Mrs. M. Oh, it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree !—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him ; but behold, this very day, I have interceded another letter from the fellow—I believe I have it in my pocket.

Capt. A. O, the devil ! my last note ! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. M. Ay, here it is.

Capt. A. Ay, my note, indeed ! O, the little traitress, Lucy ! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. M. There, perhaps you may know the writing.
(*Gives him the Letter.*)

Capt. A. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I certainly must have seen this hand before.

Mrs. M. Nay, but read it, captain.

Capt. A. (*Reads.*) *My soul's idol, my adored Lydia !—*Very tender, indeed !

Mrs. M. Tender ! ay, and profane too, o'my conscience !

Capt. A. *I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival—*

Mrs. M. That's you, sir.

Capt. A. *Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honour.—*Well, that's handsome enough.

Mrs. M. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so.

Capt. A. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am.

Mrs. M. But go on, sir—you'll see presently.

Capt. A. *As for the old weather-beaten she-dragon, who guards you—Who can he mean by that?*

Mrs. M. Me, sir—me—he means me there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

Capt. A. Impudent scoundrel!—*it shall go hard but I will elude her vigilance; as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity, which makes her dress up her coarse features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand—*

Mrs. M. There, sir, an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! was ever such a brute! Sure, if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs.

Capt. A. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see—*same ridiculous vanity—*

Mrs. M. You need not read it again, sir!

Capt. A. I beg pardon, ma'am—*does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration—an impudent coxcomb—so that I have a scheme to see you shortly, with the old Harridan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews.—Was ever such assurance!*

Mrs. M. Did you ever hear any thing like it? (*They rise.*) He'll elude my vigilance, will he?—yes, yes!—ha! ha! he's very likely to enter these doors!—we'll try who can plot best!

Capt. A. So we will, ma'am—so we will.—Ha! ha! ha! a conceited puppy! ha! ha! ha!—Well, but *Mrs. Malaprop*, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape—while I, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. M. I am delighted with the scheme; never was any thing better perpetrated.

Capt. A. But, pray, could I not see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. M. Why, I don't know—I doubt she is not prepared for a visit of this kind.—There is a decorum in these matters.

Capt. A. O Lord, she won't mind me!—only tell her, Beverley—

Mrs. M. Sir!

Capt. A. Gently, good tongue! (Aside.)

Mrs. M. What did you say of Beverley?

Capt. A. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below—she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. M. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves—besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha!—Let him if he can, I say again.—Lydia, come down here! (Calling.) He'll make me a go-between in their interviews!—ha! ha! ha!—Come down, I say, Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing—ha! ha! ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Capt. A. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am!—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. M. The little hussy won't hear.—Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—she shall know that captain Absolute is come to wait on her.—And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Capt. A. As you please, ma'am.

Mrs. M. For the present, captain, your servant—Ah, you've not done laughing yet, I see—elude my vigilance! yes, yes—Ha! ha! ha! [Exit, R.H.]

Capt. A. Ha! ha! ha! one would think, now, that I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize with security—but such is Lydia's caprice, that, to undeceive, were probably to lose her. I'll see

whether she knows me. (*Walks aside, and seems engaged in looking at the Pictures.*)

Enter LYDIA, R.H.

Lyd. What a scene am I now to go through! surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart.—I have heard of girls persecuted, as I am, who have appealed, in behalf of their favoured lover, to the generosity of his rival: suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival—an officer too!—but, oh, how unlike my Beverley!—I wonder he don't begin—truly, he seems a very negligent wooer!—quite at his ease, upon my word!—I'll speak first—Mr. Absolute!

Capt. A. Ma'am. (*Tunes round.*)

Lyd. O heavens! Beverley!

Capt. A. Hush!—hush, my life!—softly! be not surprised!

Lyd. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed!—for heavens sake, how came you here?

Capt. A. Briefly—I have deceived your aunt—I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and, contriving to have him kept away, have passed myself on her for captain Absolute.

Lyd. Oh, charming!—and she really takes you for young Absolute?

Capt. A. Oh, she's convinced of it.

Lyd. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing, to think how her sagacity is over-reached.

Capt. A. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur—then let me now conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserving persecution, and, with a licensed warmth, plead for my reward.

Lyd. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth?—that burden on the wings of love?

Capt. A. Oh, come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness!—Bring no portion to me but thy love—'twill be generous in you, Lydia—for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lyd. How persuasive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him! (*Aside.*)

Capt. A. By heavens, I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say, the world affords no smile to me but here.

(*Embracing her.*)

If she holds out now, the devil is in it. (*Aside.*)

Lyd. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes—but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis. (*Aside.*)

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, listening, R.H.

Mrs. M. I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself. (*Aside.*)

Capt. A. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. M. Warmth abated?—so!—she has been in a passion, I suppose. (*Aside.*)

Lyd. No, nor ever can, while I have life.

Mrs. M. An ill-temper'd little devil!—She'll be in a passion all her life, will she? (*Aside.*)

Lyd. Let her choice be captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

Mrs. M. I am astonished at her assurance!—to his face—this to his face! (*Aside.*)

Capt. A. Thus, then, let me enforce my suit.

(*Kneeling.*)

Mrs. M. Ay—poor young man!—down on his knees, entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer. (*Aside.*)—Why, thou vixen!—I have overheard you.

Capt. A. Oh, confound her vigilance! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. M. Captain Absolute—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

Capt. A. So—all's safe, I find. (*Aside.*) I have hopes, madam, that time will bring the young lady—

Mrs. M. O, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

Lyd. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. M. Why, thou unblushing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face, that you loved another better?—didn't you say you never would be his?

Lyd. No, madam, I did not.

Mrs. M. Good heavens, what assurance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman! Didn't you boast that Beverley—that stroller, Beverley—possessed your heart?—Tell me that, I say.

Lyd. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but Beverley—

Mrs. M. Hold!—hold, assurance!—you shall not be so rude.

Capt. A. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech:—she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt me in the least, I assure you.

Mrs. M. You are too good, captain—too amiably patient:—but come with me, miss—let us see you again soon, captain—remember what we have fixed.

Capt. A. I shall, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lyd. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bev—— (Mrs. M. prevents her speaking.)

Mrs. M. Hussy!—Come along—come along.

[*Exeunt, Capt. Absolute, L.H. kissing his hand to Lydia, Mrs. Malaprop and Lydia, R.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*Acres' Lodgings.*

ACRES and DAVID discovered; Acres as just dressed.

Acres. Indeed, David—dress does make a difference, David.

Dav. (R.H.) 'Tis all in all, I think—difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: master Butler wouldn't

believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, 'Lard presarve me!' our dairy maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester, your honour's favourite, would blush like my waistcoat—Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether Phillis would wag a hair of her tail!

Acres. Ay, David, there's nothing like polishing.

Dav. So I says of your honour's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

Acres. But, David, has Mr. de la Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chasing, and boring.

Dav. I'll call again, sir. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Acres. Do—and see if there are any letters for me at the Post-office.

Dav. I will.—By the mass, I can't help looking at your head! if I hadn't been at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself!

[*Exit David, L.H.*]

(*Acres comes forward, practising a dancing step.*)

Acres. Sink, slide—coupee—Confound the first inventors of cotillions, say I!—they are as bad as algebra, to us country gentlemen—I can walk a minuet easy enough, when I am forced!—and I have been accounted a good stick in a country dance.—Odds jigs and tabors!—I never valued your cross-over to couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the country!—but these outlandish heathen allemandes and cotillions are quite beyond me!—I shall never prosper at them, that's sure—mine are true-born English legs—they don't understand their cursed French lingo!—their *pas* this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other!—damn me! my feet don't like to be called paws!

Enter SERVANT, R. H.

Ser. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

Acres. Show him in.

[*Exit Servant, R.H.*]

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER, R.H.

Sir L. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

Sir L. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

Acres. 'Faith, I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last!—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as a very ill-used gentleman.

Sir L. Pray, what is the case?—I ask no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius; I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of. This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

Sir L. Very ill, upon my conscience!—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

Sir L. A rival in the case, is there?—and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

Acres. Unfairly! to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

Sir L. Then sure you know what is to be done!

Acres. Not I, upon my soul!

Sir L. We wear no swords here, but you understand me?

Acres. What! fight him!

Sir L. Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir L. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another, than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

Acres. Breach of friendship! Ay, ay; but I have no

acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

Sir L. That's no argument at all—he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

Acres. 'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace; odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right on my side?

Sir L. What the devil signifies right when your honour is concerned? do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad swords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valour arising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say—odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir L. Ah, my little friend! if we had Blunderbuss Hall here—I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the New Room, every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank heaven, our honour and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

Acres. Oh, Sir Lucius, I have had ancestors too!—every man of them colonel or captain in the militia!—odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it.—The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast!—Z—ds! as the man in the play says, 'I could do such deeds'—

Sir L. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

Acres. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me.—Come, here's pen and paper. (*Sits down to write, L.H.*) I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand, however.

Sir L. Pray compose yourself. (*Sits down, R.H.*)

Acres. Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do
Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme?

Sir L. Pho! pho! do the thing decently, and like a
Christian. Begin now—*Sir*—

Acres. That's too civil by half.

Sir L. To prevent the confusion that might arise—

Acres. Well—

Sir L. From our both addressing the same lady—

Acres. Ay—there's the reason—same lady—Well—

Sir L. I shall expect the honour of your company—

Acres. Z—ds! I'm not asking him to dinner!

Sir L. Pray, be easy.

Acres. Well, then, honour of your company—

Sir L. To settle our pretensions—

Acres. Well.

Sir L. Let me see—ay, King's Mead fields will do
—in King's Mead fields.

Acres. So, that's done.—Well, I'll sold it up pre-
sently; my own crest—a hand and dagger, shall be the
seal.

Sir L. You see, now, this little explanation will put
a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding
that might arise between you.

Acres. Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

Sir L. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time.—
Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if
you can; then, let the worst come of it, 'twill be off
your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir L. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it
be by letter, till the evening—I would do myself the
honour to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret
I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own
hands. There is a gay captain here who put a jest on
me lately at the expense of my country, and I only
want to fall in with the gentleman to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I should like to see you fight
first! Odds life, I should like to see you kill him, if it
was only to get a little lesson!

Sir L. I shall be very proud of instructing you.—Well, for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do every thing in a mild and agreeable manner.—Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished as your sword.

[*Exeunt; Sir Lucius, R.H. Acres, L.H.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Acres' Lodgings.*

ACRES and DAVID discovered.

Dav. Then, by the mass, sir, I would do no such thing! ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight when I was'nt so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say when she hears o't?

Acres. But my honour, David, my honour! I must be very careful of my honour.

Dav. Ay, by the mass, and I would be very careful of it, and I think in return my honour couldn't do less than to be very careful of me.

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honour!

Dav. I say, then, it would be but civil in honour never to risk the loss of a gentleman.—Look ye, master, this honour seems to me to be a marvellous false friend; ay, truly, a very courtier-like servant.—Put the case, I was a gentleman (which, thank heaven, no one can say of me;) well—my honour makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance.—So—we fight. (Pleasant enough that.) Boh! I kill him—(the more's my luck.) Now, pray, who gets the profit of it?—why, my honour.—But, put the case that he kills me! by the mass! I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy.

Acres. No, David, in that case!—Odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave!

Dav. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

Acres. Z—ds! David, you are a coward!—It doesn't become my valour to listen to you.—What, shall I disgrace my ancestors!—Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

Dav. Under favour, the surest way of not disgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look ye, now, master, to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think it might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But, David, now, you don't think there is such very, very, very great danger, hey?—Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done!

Dav. By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you!—Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his d—n'd double barrell'd swords and cut-and-thrust pistols! Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to think on't—those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons! well, I never could abide them!—from a child I never could fancy them!—I suppose there an't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

Acres. Z—ds! I won't be afraid—odds fire and fury! you sha'nt make me afraid.—Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend, Jack Absolute, to carry it for me.

Dav. Ay, i'the name of mischief, let him be the messenger.—For my part, I would'nt lend a hand to it, for the best horse in your stable. By the mass! it don't look like another letter!—it is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter!—and I warrant smells of gunpowder, like a soldier's pouch!—Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon!—you ha'n't the valour of a grasshopper.

Dav. Well, I say no more—'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod Hall!—but I ha' done.—How Phillis will howl when she hears of it!—ay, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after!—and I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born! (*Whimpering.*)

Acres. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight—so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter SERVANT, R.H.

Ser. Captain Absolute, sir.

Acres. O! show him up. [*Exit Servant, R.H.*]

David. Well, Heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

Acres. What's that?—Don't provoke me, David!

Dav. Good by, master. (*Whimpering.*)

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven. [*Exit David, L.H.*]

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, R.H.

Capt. A. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead!—If I hadn't the valour of St. George, and the dragon to boot—

Capt. A. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. Oh!—there— (*Gives him the challenge.*)

Capt. A. To Ensign Beverley. So—what's going on now! (*Aside.*) Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Capt. A. Indeed!—Why, you won't fight him, will you, Bob?

Acres. 'Egad, but I will, Jack.—Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage—and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

Capt. A. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know something of this

fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

Capt. A. Well, give it me, and trust me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Capt. A. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it.—No trouble in the world, I assure you.

Acres. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend:—you couldn't be my second,—could you, Jack?

Capt. A. Why, no, Bob—not in this affair—it would not be quite so proper.

Acres. Well, then, I must get my friend Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

Capt. A. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter SERVANT, R.H.

Serv. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

Capt. A. I'll come instantly. [*Exit Servant, R. H.* Well, my little hero, success attend you. (*Going.*)

Acres. Stay, stay, Jack.—If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

Capt. A. To be sure I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

Acres. Ay, do, do—and if that frightens him, 'egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

Capt. A. I will; I will; I'll say you are call'd, in the country, 'Fighting Bob.'

Acres. Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief: for I don't want to take his life, if I clear my honour.

Capt. A. No!—that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wish me to kill him, do you, Jack?

Capt. A. No, upon my soul, I do not. But a devil of a fellow, hey? (*Going.*)

Acres. True, true—But stay—stay, Jack—you may add, that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage.

Capt. A. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

Capt. A. Ay, ay, 'Fighting Bob.'

[*Exeunt Acres, L.H. Capt. Absolute, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.*

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and LYDIA, R.H.

Mrs. M. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to him?—Isn't he a handsome man?—tell me that.—A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lyd. She little thinks whom she is praising.
(*Aside*) So is Beverley, ma'am.

Mrs. M. No caparisons, miss, if you please.—Caparisons don't become a young woman.—No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman.

Lyd. Ay, the captain Absolute you have seen.

(*Aside.*)

Mrs. M. Then he's so well bred;—so full of alacrity and adulation!—He has so much to say for himself, in such good language too. His physiogomy so grammatical; then his presence so noble! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:—'Hesperian curls—the front of Job himself! an eye, like March, to threaten at command!—a station, like Harry Mercury, new'—Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

Lyd. How enraged she'll be presently, when she discovers her mistake!
(*Aside.*)

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Show them up here. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*]
Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman.—Show your good breeding, at least, though you have forgot your duty.

Lyd. Madam, I have told you my resolution!—I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to, or look at him. (*Flings herself into a Chair, with her Face from the Door.*)

Enter SIR ANTHONY and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, L.H.

Sir Anth. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop; come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty,—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow.—I don't know what's the matter, but if I had not held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

Mrs. M. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair.—I am ashamed for the cause! Lydia, Lydia, rise, I beseech you!—pay your respects!

(Aside to her.)

Sir Anth. I hope, madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her aunt's choice, and my alliance.—Now, Jack, speak to her.

(Aside to him.)

Capt. A. What the devil shall I do?—*(Aside.)*—You see, sir, she won't even look at me whilst you are here.—I knew she wouldn't!—I told you so—Let me entreat you, sir, to leave us together!

(Capt. A. seems to expostulate with his Father.)

Sir Anth. I say, sir, I won't stir a foot yet.

Mrs. M. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small.—Turn round, Lydia, I blush for you!

(Aside to her.)

Sir Anth. May I not flatter myself, that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son!—why don't you begin, Jack?—Speak, you puppy,—speak!

(Aside to him.)

Mrs. M. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any.—She will not say she has.—Answer, hussy! why don't you answer?

(Aside to her.)

Sir Anth. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness.—Z—ds! sirrah! why don't you speak?

(Aside to him.)

Capt. A. Hem! hem! Madam—hem! *(Capt. Absolute attempts to speak, then returns to Sir Anth.)*—Faith sir, I am so confounded!—and so—so confused!—I told you I should be so, sir,—I knew it.—The—the

tremor of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

Sir Anth. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it?—Go up, and speak to her directiy! (*Capt. Absolute makes signs to Mrs. Malaprop to leave them together.*) What the devil are you at? unlock your jaws, sirrah, or— (*Aside to him.*)

Capt. A. (Draws near Lydia.) Now heaven send she may be too sullen to look round!—I must disguise my voice. (*Aside.—Speaks in a low, hoarse tone.*)—Will not miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love!—Will not—

Sir Anth. What the devil ails the fellow?—Why don't you speak out?—not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsey!

Capt. A. The—the—excess of my awe, and my—my—modesty, quite choak me!

Sir Anth. Ah! your modesty again!—I'll tell you what, Jack: if you don't speak out directly and glibly too, I shall be in such a rage!—Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favour us with something more than a side-front. (*Mrs. Malaprop seems to chide Lydia.*)

Capt. A. So! all will out, I see! (*Goes up to Lydia,—speaks softly.*) Be not surprised, my Lydia, suppress all surprise at present.

Lyd. (Aside.) Heavens! 'tis Beverley's voice!— (*Looks round by degrees, then starts up.*) Is this possible!—my Beverley! how can this be?—my Beverley?

Capt. A. Ah! 'tis all over! (*Aside.*)

Sir Anth. Beverley!—the devil—Beverley!—What can the girl mean? This is my son, Jack Absolute.

Mrs. M. For shame, hussy! for shame!—your head runs so on that fellow, that you have him always in your eyes! beg Captain Absolute's pardon, directly.

Lyd. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley!

Sir Anth. Z—ds, the girl's mad!—her brain's turned by reading!

Mrs. M. O'my conscience, I believe so!—what do you mean by Beverley, hussy?—you saw Captain

Absolute before to-day, there he is—your husband that shall be.

Lyd. With all my soul, ma'am—when I refuse my Beverley—

Sir Anth. Oh! she's as mad as Bedlam!—or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick!—Come here, sirrah, who the devil are you?

Capt. A. 'Faith, sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir Anth. Are you my son or not?—answer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Capt. A. Ye powers of impudence, befriend me! (*Aside.*) Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sincerely believe myself to be yours also, I hope my duty has always shown.—Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer—and shall be proud to add affectionate nephew.—I need not tell my Lydia that she sees her faithful Beverley, who, knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assumed that name, and a station, which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lyd. So!—there will be no elopement after all!

(*Sullenly.*)

Sir Anth. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow!—To do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

Capt. A. Oh, you flatter me, sir,—you compliment—'tis my modesty you know, sir—my modesty, that has stood in my way.

Sir Anth. Well, I am glad you are not the dull insensible varlet you pretended to be, however!—I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am.—So this was your penitence, your duty, and obedience!—I thought it was d—n'd sudden.—You never heard their names before, not you!—What, the Languishes of Worcestershire, hey?—if you could please me in the affair, 'twas all you desired!—Ah! you dissembling villain!—What! (*Pointing to Lydia.*)—she squints, don't she?—a little red-haired girl!—hey?—

Why, you hypocritical young rascal—I wonder you a'n't ashamed to hold up your head!

Capt. A. 'Tis with difficulty, sir—I am confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

Mrs. M. O lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me!—hey!—how! what! captain, did you write the letters then?—What!—am I to thank you for the elegant compilation of an “old weather-beaten she-dragon,”—hey?—O mercy!—was it you that reflected on my parts of speech?

Capt. A. Dear sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last, if you don't assist me.—I shall certainly not be able to stand it.

Sir Anth. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive;—odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden, that I could find in my heart to be so good-humoured! and so gallant!—hey! Mrs. Malaprop!—Come we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant!—Jack—isn't the cheek as I said, hey?—and the eye, you rogue!—and the lip—hey? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—their's is the time of life for happiness!—*Youth's the season made for joy*—(*Sings.*)—hey!—Odd's life! I'm in such spirits,—I don't know what I could not do!—Permit me, ma'am—(*Gives his hand to Mrs. Malaprop.*)—(*Sings.*)—*Tol de rol*—'gad I should like to have a little fooling myself—*Tol de rol! de rol!*

[*Exit, singing, and handing Mrs. Malaprop, off,*

R.H.—*Lydia sits sullenly in her Chair.*

Capt. A. So much thought hodes me no good.—(*Aside.*)—So grave, Lydia!

Lyd. Sir!

Capt. A. So! 'egad! I thought as much!—that d—ned monosyllable has froze me! (*Aside.*)—What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our friends' consent as in our mutual vows—

Lyd. Friends' consent, indeed! (*Peevishly.*)

Capt. A. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance—a little wealth and comfort may be en-

dured after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as—

Lyd. Lawyers! I hate lawyers!

Capt. A. Nay, then we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the license, and—

Lyd. The license!—I hate license!

Capt. A. Oh, my love! be not so unkind!—thus let me entreat—

(*Kneeling.*)

Lyd. Pshaw! what signifies kneeling, when you know I must have you?

Capt. A. (Rising.) Nay, madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you.—If I have lost your heart,—I resign the rest—'Gad, I must try what a little spirit will do.

(*Aside.*)

Lyd. (Rising.) Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating me like a child!—humouring my romance; and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Capt. A. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear—

Lyd. So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them all—behold, my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation—and I am myself the only dupe at last! (*Walking about in a heat.*)—But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! (*Taking a Miniature from her Bosom.*)—which I have worn, night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties!—There sir, (*Flings it to him.*)—and be assured, I throw the original from my heart as easily.

Capt. A. Nay, nay, ma'am, we will not differ as to that—here,—(*Taking out a Picture.*)—here is Miss Lydia Languish.—What a difference!—ay, there is the heavenly assenting smile, that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes!—those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar!—and there the half-resentful blush, that would have checked the ar-

dour of my thanks.—Well, all that's past; all over indeed!—There, madam, in beauty, that copy is not equal to you, but in my mind, its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I'll put it in my pocket. (*Puts it up again.*)

Lyd. (*Softening.*) 'Tis your own doing, sir—I, I, I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

Capt. A. Oh, most certainly—sure now, this is much better than being in love!—ha! ha!—ha!—there's some spirit in this!—What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises;—all that's of no consequence, you know.—To be sure people will say, that miss didn't know her own mind—but never mind that:—or, perhaps, they may be ill-natured enough to hint, that the gentleman grew tired of the lady, and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

Lyd. There's no bearing his insolence!

(*Bursts into Tears.*)

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY, R.H.

Mrs. M. (*Entering.*) Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing awhile.

Lyd. This is worse than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate! (*Sobbing.*)

Sir Anth. What the devil's the matter now!—Z—ds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the oddest billing and cooing I ever heard!—but what the deuce is the meaning of it?—I'm quite astonished!

Capt. A. Ask the lady, sir.

Mrs. M. Oh, mercy!—I'm quite analys'd, for my part!—why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

Lyd. Ask the gentleman, ma'am.

Sir Anth. Z—ds! I shall be in a frenzy!—why, Jack, you are not come out to be any one else, are you?

Mrs. M. Ay, sir, there's no more trick, is there?—you are not, like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once, are you?

Capt. A. You'll not let me speak—I say the lady can account for this much better than I can.

Lyd. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again—there is the man—I now obey you:—for from this moment, I renounce him for ever. *[Exit, R.H.]*

Mrs. M. O mercy and miracles! what a turn here is!—Why sure, captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

Sir Anth. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—Ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

Capt. A. Nay, sir, upon my word—

Sir Anth. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure 'twas so. Come, no excuses, Jack;—why your father, you rogue, was so before you:—the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.

Capt. A. By all that's good, sir—

Sir Anth. Z—ds! say no more, I tell you—Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace.—You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop:—you must tell her, 'tis Jack's way,—tell her, 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family!—Come away, Jack, ha! ha! ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain!

[Pushes him out, L.H.]

Mrs. M. Oh, Sir Anthony!—O, fie, captain!

[Exeunt; Sir Anth. L.H. Mrs. M. R.H.]

SCENE III.—*The North Parade.*

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER, R.H.

Sir L. I wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself.—Upon my conscience these officers are always in one's way in love affairs:—I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me!—And I wonder too what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in them, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth.—Hah, isn't this the

captain coming?—'faith, it is!—There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! who the devil is he talking to?

(*Steps aside, R.H.*)

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, L.H.

Capt. A. To what fine purpose have I been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul!—a little gipsy!—I did not think her romance could have made her so d—n'd absurd either.—'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humour in my life!—I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

Sir L. O, 'faith! I'm in the luck of it.—I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be sure I'm just come in the nick! now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly. (*Aside.—Goes up to Capt. Absolute.*)—With regard to that matter, captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Capt. A. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant:—because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir L. That's no reason; for give me leave to tell you, a man may think an untruth as well as speak one.

Capt. A. Very true, sir; but if a man never utters his thoughts, I should think they might stand a chance of escaping controversy.

Sir L. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

Capt. A. Hark ye, Sir Lucius, if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview;—for, what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir L. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension; (*Bowing.*)—you have named the very thing I would be at.

Capt. A. Very well, sir,—I shall certainly not baulk

your inclinations—but I should be glad you would please to explain your motives.

Sir L. Pray, sir, be easy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel, as it stands—we should only spoil it by trying to explain it.—However, your memory is very short—or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week.—So, no more, but name your time and place.

Capt. A. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better;—let it be this evening—here by the Spring Gardens.—We shall scarcely be interrupted.

Sir L. 'Faith! that same interruption, in affairs of this nature, shows very great ill-breeding.—I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness.—However, if it's the same to you, captain, I should take it as a particular kindness, if you'd let us meet in King's Mead-fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may despatch both matters at once.

Capt. A. 'Tis the same to me exactly.—A little after six, then, we will discuss this matter more seriously.

Sir L. If you please, sir; there will be very pretty small-sword light, though it won't do for a long shot.—So that matter's settled! and my mind's at ease.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Enter FAULKLAND, L.H.

Capt. A. Well met.—I was going to look for you.—Oh, Faulkland! all the demons of spite and disappointment have conspired against me! I'm so vexed, that if I had not the prospect of a resource, in being knocked o'the head by-and-bye, I should scarce have spirits to tell you the cause.

Faulk. What can you mean?—Has Lydia changed her mind?—I should have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the same object.

Capt. A. Ay, just as the eyes do of a person who

squints :—when her love-eye was fixed on me—t'other, her eye of duty, was finely obliqued :—but when duty bid her point that the same way—off t'other turned on a swivel, and secured its retreat with a frown !

Faulk. But what's the resource you—

Capt. A. Oh, to wind up the whole, Sir Lucius O'Trigger—you know him by sight—for some affront, which I am sure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at six o'clock,—'tis on that account I wished to see you—you must go with me.

Faulk. Nay, there must be some mistake, sure.—Sir Lucius shall explain himself—and I dare say matters may be accommodated :—but this evening, did you say ?—I wish it had been any other time.

Capt. A. Why ? there will be light enough :—there will as Sir Lucius says) ' be very pretty small-sword light, though it will not do for a long shot.'—Confound his long shots !

Faulk. But I am myself a good deal ruffled, by a difference I have had with Julia.—My vile, tormenting temper has made me treat her so cruelly, that I shall not be myself till we are reconciled.

Capt. A. By heavens, Faulkland, you don't deserve her !

Enter SERVANT, R.H. gives Faulkland a Letter.

Faulk. O, Jack ! this is from Julia ; I dread to open it.

Capt. A. Here—let me see—(*Takes the Letter and opens it.*) Ay, a final sentence, indeed ! 'tis all over with you, 'faith !

Faulk. Nay, Jack, don't keep me in suspense.

Capt. A. Hear, then. (*Reads.*)

As I am convinced, that my dear Faulkland's own reflections have already upbraided him for his last unkindness to me, I will not add a word on the subject. I wish to speak with you as soon as possible.

Your's, ever and truly,

JULIA.

There's stubbornness and resentment for you ! (*Gives him the Letter.*) Why, man, you don't seem one whit the happier at this !

Faulk. Oh, yes; I am—but—but

Capt. A. Confound your buts! You never hear any thing that would make another man bless himself, but you immediately damn it with a but!

Faulk. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honestly—don't you think there is something forward, something indelicate, in this haste to forgive? Women should never sue for reconciliation; that should always come from us: they should retain their coldness till wooed to kindness; and their pardon, like their love, should 'Not unsought, be won.'

Capt. A. I have not patience to listen to you—thou'rt incorrigible! so say no more on the subject. I must go to settle a few matters—let me see you before six—remember—at my lodgings. A poor industrious devil, like me, who have toiled, and drudged, and plotted to gain my ends, and am, at last, disappointed by other people's folly, may, in pity, be allowed to swear and grumble a little! but a captious sceptic in love; a slave to fretfulness and whim, who has no difficulties but of his own creating, is a subject more fit for ridicule than compassion! *[Exit, R.H.]*

Faulk. I feel his reproaches; yet I would not change this too exquisite nicety for the gross content with which he tramples on the thorns of love. His engaging me in this duel has started an idea in my head, which I will instantly pursue; I'll use it as the touchstone of Julia's sincerity and disinterestedness; if her love prove pure, and sterling ore, my name will rest on it with honour! and, once I've stamped it there, I'll lay aside my doubts for ever. *[Exit, L.H.]*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Julia's Dressing-room.*

Enter JULIA, R.H.

Jul. How this message has alarmed me! what

dreadful accident can he mean? why such charge be alone? O Faulkland! how many unhappy moments, how many tears, you have cost me!

Enter FAULKLAND, L.H.D.

What means this? why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas, Julia! I am come to take a long farewell!

Jul. Heav'ns! what do you mean?

Faulk. You see before you a wretch whose life is forfeited:—Nay, start not; the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me: I left you fretful and passionate,—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel;—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly!—Oh, Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely, before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment!

Jul. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the nature of your misfortune: had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought, that I could now chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love. My heart has long known no other guardian: I now entrust my person to your honour—we will fly together: when safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled, and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows, and tenderest comforter.

Faulk. O Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude!—Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you, beside his solitary love?

Jul. I ask not a moment.—No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself: and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love.—But let us not linger—perhaps this delay—

Faulk. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark : yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition !

Jul. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act ? I know not whether 'tis so, but sure that alone can never make us unhappy.—The little I have will be sufficient to support us, and exile never should be splendid.

Faulk. Ay, but in such an abject state of life my wounded pride, perhaps, may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude morose companion, beyond your patience to endure.

Jul. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you ;—one who, by bearing your infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. Julia, I have proved you to the quick ! and with this useless device, I throw away all my doubts : How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition ?

Jul. Has no such disaster happened as you related ?

Faulk. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended. Let me to-morrow, in the face of heaven, receive my future guide and monitress, and expiate my past folly, by years of tender adoration.

Jul. Hold, Faulkland ! that you are free from a crime, which I before feared to name, heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice ! These are tears of thankfulness for that ! But, that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express !

Faulk. By heavens ! Julia—

Jul. Yet hear me—My father loved you, Faulkland ! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me ! in his presence I pledged my hand—joyfully pledged it, where before I had given my heart. When,

soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me, that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer, without a pause, my grateful duty as well as my affection : hence I have been content to bear from you, what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity.

Faulk. I confess it all ! yet, hear—

Jul. After such a year of trial, I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel, as unnecessary ! I now see that it is not in your nature to be content, or confident in love. With this conviction I never will be yours.

Faulk. Nay, but, Julia, by my soul and honour !—If, after this—

Jul. But one word more.—As my faith has once been given to you, I will never barter it with another. I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity ; and the dearest blessing I can ask of heaven to send you, will be to charm you from that unhappy temper, which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement. All I request of you is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity ; and, when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your least regret, that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world ! [Exit, R.H.D.]

Faulk. She's gone !—for ever !—There was an awful resolution in her manner, that rivetted me to my place. O, fool !—dolt !—barbarian ! Cursed as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow wretches, kind fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side !—I must now hasten to my appointment.—Well, my mind is turned for such a scene ! I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here. O love !—tormentor !—fiend ! whose influence, like the moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler

spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness !

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

Enter MAID and LYDIA, L.H.

Maid. My mistress, ma'am, I know, was here, just now ;—perhaps she is only in the next room.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

Lyd. Heigho !—Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him.

Enter JULIA, R.H.D.

Oh, Julia, I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation ! Lud, child ! what's the matter with you ? You have been crying !—I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you !

Jul. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness :—Something has flurried me a little.—Nothing that you can guess at.

Lyd. Ah ! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them.—You know who Beverley proves to be ?

Jul. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair.

Lyd. So, then, I see I have been deceived by every one ! but I don't care I'll never have him.

Jul. Nay, Lydia—

Lyd. Why, is it not provoking, when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last ?—There had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements ! so becoming a disguise !—so amiable a ladder of ropes !—Conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop ! and such paragraphs in the newspapers !—Oh, I shall die with disappointment !

Jul. I don't wonder at it.

Lyd. Now—sad reverse !—what have I to expect,

but after a deal of flimsy preparation, with a bishop's licence, and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar! or, perhaps, be cried three times in a country church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish, to join John Absolute, and Lydia Languish, spinster—Oh, that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

Jul. Melancholy, indeed!

Lyd. How mortifying, to remember the dear delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow!—How often have I stole forth in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden stuck like a dripping statue!—There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough, so pathetically!—he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension!—and, while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love!

Jul. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I should chide you only by laughing heartily at you; but it suits more the situation of my mind at present earnestly to entreat you, not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your caprice, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

(*Mrs. Malaprop speaks within, L.H.*)

Lyd. Oh, lud! what has brought my aunt here?

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and DAVID, L.H.

Mrs. M. So! so! here's fine work!—here's fine suicide, paracide, and simulation, going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

Jul. For heaven's sake, madam, what's the matter?

Mrs. M. That gentleman can tell you, 'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

Lyd. Oh, patience!—Do, ma'am, for heaven's sake! tell us what is the matter!

Mrs. M. Why murder's the matter ! slaughter's the matter ! killing's the matter ! But he can tell you the perpendiculars. *(Pointing to David.)*

Jul. Do speak, friend.

(To David.)

Dav. Look ye, my lady——by the mass, there's mischief going on. Folks don't use to meet for amusement with fire arms, firelocks, fire engines, fire screens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers beside !—This, my lady, I say has an angry favour.

Jul. But who is engaged ?

Dav. My poor master——under favour for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master of course is, or was, squire Acres—and captain Absolute.—Then comes squire Faulkland.

Jul. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavour to prevent mischief.

Mrs. M. Oh, fie ! it would be very inelegant in us :—we should only participate things.

Lyd. Do, my dear aunt, let us hasten to prevent them.

Dav. Ah, do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives !—they are desperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that blood-thirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger !—O mercy ! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape ! *(Aside.)*—Why, how you stand, girl ! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire putrefactions !

Lyd. What are we to do, madam ?

Mrs. M. Why, fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief !—Come girls, this gentleman will exhort us.—Come, sir, you're our envoy, lead the way, and we'll precede.—You're sure you know the spot.

Dav. Oh, never fear ; and one good thing is, we shall find it out by the report of the pistols.

All the Ladies. The pistols !—Oh, let us fly.

[Exeunt, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*King's Mead Fields.*

Enter SIR LUCIUS and ACRES, with Pistols, R.H. U.E.

Acres, By my valour, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards

is a good distance—Odds levels and aims!—I say, it is a good distance.

Sir L. It is for muskets, or small field pieces;—upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave these things to me.—Stay, now—I'll show you. (*Measures paces along the stage.*) There, now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

Acres. Z—ds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir L. Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius—but I should think forty, or eight and thirty yards——

Sir L. Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no!—by my valour, there is no merit in killing him so near! Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot:—a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me!

Sir L. Well,—the gentleman's friend and I must settle that.—But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius—but I don't understand—

Sir L. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and, if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say, it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A quietus!

Sir L. For instance, now—if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled, and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

Sir L. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before.

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir L. Ah, that's a pity—there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray, now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

Acres. Odds files! I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius, there—(*Puts himself into an attitude.*)—a side-front, hey?—Odd, I'll make myself small enough—I'll stand edgeways.

Sir L. Now, you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim—(*Levelling at him.*)

Acres. Z—ds, Sir Lucius! are you sure it is not cocked?

Sir L. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

Sir L. Pho! be easy.—Well, now, if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance; for if it misses a vital part on your right side, 'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left.

Acres. A vital part!

Sir L. But there—fix yourself so—(*Placing him.*) let him see the broadside of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do you any harm at all.

Acres. Clean through me!—a ball or two clean through me!

Sir L. Ay,—may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Lookye, Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one—so, by my valour! I will stand edgeways.

Sir L. (*Looking at his watch.*) Sure, they don't mean to disappoint us—hah! no faith—I think I see them coming.

Acres. Hey!—what!—coming!—

Sir L. Ay, who are those yonder, getting over the stile?

Acres. There are two of them indeed!—well, let them come,—hey, Sir Lucius!—we—we—we—we—won't run.

Sir L. Run !

Acres. No, I say—we won't run, by my valour !

Sir L. What the devil's the matter with you ?

Acres. Nothing, nothing, my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold somehow as I did.

Sir L. O fie ! consider your honour.

Acres. Ay, true—my honour—do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two, every now and then, about my honour.

Sir L. Well, here they're coming. (*Looking.*)

Acres. Sir Lucius, if I wasn't with you I should almost think I was afraid—if my valour should leave me ! valour will come and go.

Sir L. Then pray keep it fast while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes, my valour is certainly going ! it is sneaking off !—I feel it oozing out as it were, at the palms of my hands !

Sir L. Your honour—your honour, Here they are.

Acres. Oh, that I was safe at Clod Hall ! or could be shot before I was aware !

Enter FAULKLAND and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, R.H.U.E.

Sir L. Gentlemen, your most obedient—hah !—what, Captain Absolute ! So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account ?

Acres. What Jack !—my dear Jack !—my dear friend !

Capt. A. Harkye, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir L. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly. So, Mr. Beverley, (*To Faulkland.*) if you choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, sir !

Acres. Odds life ! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland ; these are my particular friends !

Sir L. What, sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres ?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, sir !

Sir L. Well, now, that's mighty provoking ! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game—you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party, by sitting out.

Capt. A. Oh pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter.

Acres. No, no, Mr. Faulkland—I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian—Lookye, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight ; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir L. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him—I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres. Why, no, Sir Lucius, I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face ? If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly !

Capt. A. Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case. 'The person who assumed that name is before you ; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir L. Well, this is lucky. Now you have an opportunity—

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend, Jack Absolute !—not if he were fifty Beverleys ! Z—ds ! Sir Lucius, you would not have me be so unnatural !

Sir L. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valour has oozed away with a vengeance !

Acres. Not in the least ! odds backs and abettors ; I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here ; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss-hall, or any thing of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

Sir L. Pho ! pho ! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward; coward was the word, by my valour!

Sir L. Well, sir?

Acres. Lookye, Sir Lucius, 't isn't that I mind the word coward—Coward may be said in a joke—But if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls—

Sir L. Well, sir?

Acres. I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir L. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Capt. A. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres. He is a most determined dog—called in the country, fighting Bob.—He generally kills a man a week;—don't you Bob?

Sir L. Well, then, captain, 'tis we must begin—so come out, my little counsellor, (*Draws his sword.*)—and ask the gentleman, whether he will resign the lady without forcing you to proceed against him?

Capt. A. Come on then, sir, (*Draws.*) since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

Enter SIR ANTHONY, DAVID, and the LADIES, I. H. U. E.

Dav. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular—and bind his hands over to their good behaviour!

Sir Anth. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a fiency—how came you in a duel, sir?

Capt. A. 'Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his majesty.

Sir Anth. Here's a pretty fellow! I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his majesty!—Z—ds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the king's sword against one of his subjects?

Capt. Abs. Sir, I tell you, that gentleman called me out, without explaining his reasons.

Sir Anth. 'Gad, sir! how came you to call my son out, without explaining your reasons?

Sir L. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir Anth. Z—ds, Jack! how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs. M. Come, come, let's have no honour before ladies—Captain Absolute, come here—How could you intimidate us so?—Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Capt. A. For fear I should be kill'd, or escape, ma'am?

Mrs. M. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinced: speak, child.

Sir L. With your leave, ma'am, I must put in a word here—I believe I could interrupt the young lady's silence—now mark—

Lyd. What is it you mean, sir?

Sir L. Come, come, Dalia, we must be serious now—this is no time for trifling.

Lyd. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

Capt. A. Oh, my little angel, say you so?—Sir Lucius, I perceive there must be some mistake here—with regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you, I can only say that it could not have been intentional. And as you must be convinced, that I should not fear to support a real injury—you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency—I ask your pardon.—But for this lady, while honoured with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

Sir Anth. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to any thing in the world—and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir L. Captain, give me your hand—an affront hand—

somely acknowledged becomes an obligation—and as for the lady—if she chooses to deny her own handwriting here—
(*Takes out Letters.*)

Mrs. M. Oh, he will dissolve my mystery!—Sir Lucius perhaps there is some mistake. Perhaps I can illuminate—

Sir L. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no business.—Miss Languish, are you my Dalia, or not?

Lyd. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not?

(*Lydia and Absolute walk aside.*)

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the soft impeachment—pardon my camelion blushes, I am Dalia.

Sir L. You Dalia—pho! pho! be easy.

Mrs. M. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke—those letters are mine—When you are more sensible of my benignity, perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

Sir L. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension; and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you.—And to show you I am not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Dalia into the bargain.

Capt. A. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's my friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir L. Hah! little valour—here, will you make your fortune?

Acres. Odds wrinkles! No.—but give me your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

Sir Anth. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. M. O, Sir Anthony!—men are all barbarians!
(*All retire but Julia and Faulkland.*)

Jul. He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen?

—there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me—O woman! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

Faulk. Julia!—how can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet hope is the child of penitence.

Jul. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours. (*Sir Anthony comes forward between them.*)

Faulk. Now I shall be blest, indeed.

Sir Anth. What's going on here?—So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant.—Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland, seemed to proceed from what he calls the delicacy and warmth of his affection for you.—There, marry him directly, Julia, you'll find he'll mend surprisingly! (*The rest of the characters come forward.*)

Sir L. Come now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better—

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius—So, Jack, I wish you joy.—Mr. Faulkland the same.—Ladies,—come now, to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I insist on your all meeting me there.

Sir Anth. 'Gad! sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a good husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent

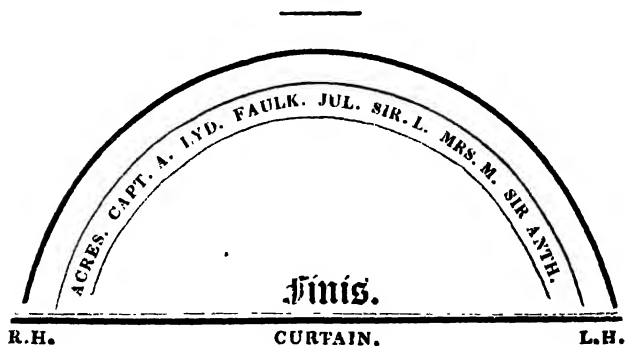
heart; and mine for having, by her gentleness and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

Capt. A. True, Faulkland, we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets of love—with this difference only, that you always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I—

Lyd. Was always obliged to me for it, hey? Mr. Modesty!—But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

Jul. Then let us study to preserve it so; and while hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future bliss, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright to be lasting.—When hearts deserving happiness would unite their fortunes, virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them when its leaves are dropt!

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





T. Wageman, fecit.

MR JOHNSTONE,
AS MAJOR O'FLAHERTY.

Orberry's Edition.

THE
WEST INDIAN.

A COMEDY;

BY

Richard Cumberland.

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PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE-STREET;
AND C. CHAPPLE, 66, PALL-MALL.

1818.

**W. OXBERRY AND CO. PRINTERS,
8, WHITE HART YARD.**

Remarks.

THE "West Indian" is a play that from the time of its first appearing has continued to hold possession of the stage, with just enough merit to keep it there, and no striking faults to drive it thence. It is above mediocrity. There is an agreeable vein of good humour and animal spirits running through it that does not suffer it to sink into downright insipidity, nor ever excites any very high degree of interest or delight. Wit there is none: and hardly an attempt at humour, except in the character of *Major O'Flaherty*, who would not be recognized as a genuine Irishman but by virtue of his representative on the stage. His blunders and conduct are not such as would proceed from the good-natured unthinking impetuosity of such a person as *O'Flaherty* is intended to be: but they are such as the author might sit down and try to invent for him. It is not an Irish character, but a character playing the Irishman; not a hasty, warm-hearted, hair-brained fellow, stumbling on mistakes by accident either in his words or actions, but a very complaisant gentleman, looking out for them by design, to humour the opinion which you entertain of him, and who is to make himself a national butt for the audience to laugh at. The "West Indian" himself (*Belcour*) is certainly the support of the piece. There is something interesting in the idea of seeing a young fellow of high animal spirits, a handsome fortune, and considerable generosity of feeling, launched from the other side of the world (with the additional impetus that the distance would give him) to run the gauntlet of the follies and vices of the town, to fall into scrapes only to get out of them, and who is full of professions of attachment to virtues which he does not practice, and of repentance for offences which he has not committed. It is the same character as *Charles Surface* in the "School for Scandal" with an infusion of the romantic from his transatlantic origin, and an additional excuse for his extravagances in the tropical temperature of his blood. Of the other characters it is not easy to speak, for it is not easy to know what to think of them. *Stockwell* is a merchant, and *Stukely* is his clerk. *Mr. and Mrs. Fulmer* are a very well-matched pair; but they are vulgarity and intrigue, without any attempt at disguise or in one that is quite worn out. *Lady Rusport* is not a bit better. *Louisa Dudley* is a handsome girl who is persecuted by the addresses

of the men, and *Charlotte Rusport* is a sentimental young lady who persecutes the men with her's. It was a common practise with Cumberland's Muse to make the women court the men. This is neither very decorous nor inviting to the imagination ; and is " a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance." *Dudley*, the father, and old *Varland*, are characters in the back-ground ; and who do not advance near enough to the front of the stage for us to distinguish their features. The scene between *O'Flaherty* and *Varland*, in which the former overhears and defeats the conspiracy relating to the will, has the most of dramatic effect of any in the piece : but it is a thousand years old. The language of this play is elegant but common place : the speakers seem in general more intent on adjusting their periods than on settling their affairs. The sentiments aspire to liberality. They are amiably mawkish, and as often as they incline to paradox, have a vapid sort of petulance about them, which excites neither our sympathy nor our esteem.

The plot is a good plot. It is well laid, decently distributed through the course of five acts, and wound up at last to its final catastrophe in a single sentence. The worst of it is, that though the parties concerned remain in ignorance of it, the reader sees through it from the beginning ; and the great art of the author seems to be, to deal it out with such deliberation and discretion, as neither to overwhelm us with surprise, nor disappoint our expectations. Cumberland, the author of the " *West Indian*," may be considered as one of the first persons who naturalized the sentimental comedy, or the *comédie larmoyante* in this country. Goldsmith says of him, that " he altered his plan, and instead of drawing from nature, improved upon her." We wish he had not!—

The time this piece takes in representation is two hours and fifty minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes—the second, thirty-five—the third, thirty-six—the fourth, thirty-four—the fifth, thirty-five.—The half price commences, generally, at ten minutes before nine o'clock.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. REDDISH.

Critics, hark forward ! noble game and new ;
A fine West Indian started full in view :
Hot as the soil, the clime, which gave him birth,
You'll run him on a burning scent to earth ;
Yet don't devour him in his hiding place ;
Bag him, he'll serve you for another chace ;
For sure that country has no feeble claim,
Which swells your commerce, and supports your fame.
And in this humble sketch, we hope you'll find,
Some emanations of a noble mind ;
Some little touches, which though void of art,
May find, perhaps, their way into the heart.
Another hero your excuse implores,
Sent by your sister kingdom to your shores ;
Doom'd by Religion's too severe command,
To fight for bread against his native land :
A brave, unthinking animated rogue,
With here and there a touch upon the brogue ;
Laugh, but despise him not, for on his lip
His errors lie ; his heart can never trip.
Others there are—but may we not prevail
To let the gentry tell their own plain tale ?
Shall they come in ? They'll please you, if they can ;
If not, condemn the bard—but spare the *Man*.
For speak, think, act, or write in angry times,
A wish to please is made the worst of crimes ;
Dire slander now with black envenom'd dart,
Stands ever arm'd to stab you to the heart.
Rouse, Britons, rouse, for honour of your isle,
Your old good humour ; and be seen to smile.

PROLOGUE.

You say we write not like our fathers—true,
Nor were our fathers half so strict as you,
Damn'd not each error of the poet's pen,
But judging man, remember'd they were men
Aw'd into silence by the times abuse,
Sleeps many a wise, and many a witty muse ;
We that for mere experiment came out,
Are but the light-arm'd rangers on the scout .
High on Parnassus' lofty summit stands
The immortal camp ; there lie the chosen bands
But give fair quarter to his puny elves,
The giants then will sally forth themselves ;
With wit's sharp weapons vindicate the age,
And drive ev'n *Arthur's* magic from the *Stage*.

Costume.

BELCOUR.

Full dress blue coat, lined with white silk, white waistcoat and breeches, and cocked hat.

O'FLAHERTY.

Green uniform coat, orange lappels, cuffs and collar, white linings and turnbacks, trimmed with silver, white breeches, boots, cocked hat, sword and belt.

DUDLEY.

Blue coat, white waistcoat, black breeches.

CHARLES DUDLEY.

Scarlet uniform coat, white pantaloons, boots, cocked hat, sword and belt.

VARLAND.

Snuff-coloured cloth suit, old fashioned large wig, cocked hat, gold headed cane.

FULMER.

Grey coat, striped waistcoat, black breeches.

STOCKWELL.

Suit of black velvet, cocked hat.

STUKELY.

Black coat, white waistcoat, black breeches.

LADY RUSPORT.

Grey satin dress, trimmed with black.

CHARLOTTE RUSPORT.

Grey sarsnet body white leno skirt, trimmed at the bottom with black velvet leaves and flowers.

LOUISA DUDLEY.

White leno dress, with tucks, drawn with black, leno scarf.

MRS. FULMER.

Green sarsnet dress, pink apron, trimmed brown.

MAID.

Coloured cotton gown.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

As originally acted.

<i>Stockwell</i>	Mr. Aikin.
<i>Belcour</i>	Mr. King.
<i>Captain Dudley</i>	Mr. Packer.
<i>Charles Dudley</i>	Mr. Cautherley.
<i>Major O'Flaherty</i>	Mr. Moody.
<i>Stukely</i>	Mr. J. Aikin.
<i>Fulmer</i>	Mr. Baddeley.
<i>Varland</i>	Mr. Parsons.
<i>Servant to Stockwell</i>	Mr. Wheeler.
<i>Lady Rusport</i>	Mrs. Hopkins.
<i>Charlotte Rusport</i>	Mrs. Abingdon.
<i>Louisa Dudley</i>	Mrs. Baddeley.
<i>Mrs. Fulmer</i>	Mrs. Egerton.
<i>Lucy</i>	Mrs. Love.
<i>Housekeeper</i>	Mrs. Bradshaw.

Covent-garden.
1807-8.

<i>Drury-lane.</i>		
<i>Stockwell</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Murray.
<i>Belcour</i>	Mr. S. Penley.	Mr. Jones.
<i>Major O'Flaherty</i>	Mr. Johnstone.	Mr. Hamerton.
<i>Captain Dudley</i>	Mr. Carr	Mr. Creswell.
<i>Charles Dudley</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Branton.
<i>Varland</i>	Mr. Knight.	Mr. Blanchard.
<i>Stukely</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Thompson.
<i>Fulmer</i>	Mr. Penley.	Mr. Simmons.
<i>Servants</i>	{ Mr. West.	Mr. Holland.
	{ Mr. Lee.	Mr. W. Murray.
<i>Sailors</i>	{ Mr. Evans.	Mr. Jefferies.
	{ Mr. Appleby.	
<i>Lady Rusport</i>	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Mattocks.
<i>Charlotte Rusport</i>	Mrs. Davison.	Mrs. C. Kemble.
<i>Louisa Dudley</i>	Miss Boyce.	Miss Norton.
<i>Mrs. Fulmer</i>	Miss Tidswell.	Mrs. Dibdin.
<i>Lucy</i>	Mrs. Scott.	Miss Logan.
<i>Housekeeper</i>	Mrs. Chatterley.	Mrs. Emery.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.		Left Hand.
S.E.		Second Entrance
U.E.		Upper Entrance.
M.D.		Middle Door.
D.F.		Door in Flat.
R.H.D.		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.		Left Hand Door.

THE WEST INDIAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Merchant's Counting-house.*

In an inner Room, set off by glass Doors, are discovered several Clerks, employed at their Desks. A Writing Table in the front Room. STOCKWELL is discovered reading a letter; STUKELY comes gently out of the back Room, and observes him some time before he speaks.

Stuke. He seems disordered: something in that letter; and, I'm afraid, of an unpleasant sort.—He has many ventures of great account at sea; a ship richly freighted for Barcelona; another for Lisbon; and others expected from Cadiz, of still greater value. Besides these, I know he has many deep concerns in foreign bottoms, and underwritings to a vast amount. I'll accost him—Sir—Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. Stukely!—Well, have you shipped the cloths?

Stuke. I have, sir; here's the bill of lading, and copy of the invoice! the assortments are all compared: Mr. Traffic will give you the policy upon 'Change.

Stock. 'Tis very well—lay these papers by: and no more business for a while. Shut the door, Stukely; I have had long proof of your friendship and fidelity to me; a matter of most intimate concern lies on my mind, and 'twill be a sensible relief to unbosom myself to you; I have just now been informed of the arrival of the young West Indian I have so long been expecting—you know who I mean?

Stuke. Yes, sir; Mr. Belcour, the young gentleman, who inherited old Belcour's great estates in Jamaica.

Stock. Hush ! not so loud ; come a little nearer this way. This Belcour is now in London ; part of his baggage is already arrived, and I expect him every minute. Is it to be wondered at, if his coming throws me into some agitation, when I tell you, Stukely, he is my son.

Stuke. Your son.

Stock. Yes, sir, my only son. Early in life, I accompanied his grandfather to Jamaica as his clerk ; he had an only daughter, somewhat older than myself ; the mother of this gentleman : it was my chance (call it good or ill) to engage her affections ; and, as the inferiority of my condition made it hopeless to expect her father's consent, her fondness provided an expedient, and we were privately married : the issue of that concealed engagement is, as I have told you, this Belcour.

Stuke. That event surely discovered your connexion.

Stock. You shall hear. Not many days after our marriage, old Belcour set out for England ; and, during his abode here, my wife was with great secrecy, delivered of this son. Fruitful in expedients to disguise her situation without parting from her infant, she contrived to have it laid and received at her door as a foundling. After some time her father returned, having left me here ; in one of those favourable moments that decide the fortunes of prosperous men, this child was introduced : from that instant he treated him as his own, gave him his name, and brought him up in his family. Old Belcour is dead, and has bequeathed his whole estate to him we are speaking of.

Stuke. Now then you are no longer bound to secrecy.

Stock. True : but before I publicly reveal myself, I could wish to make some experiment of my son's disposition : this can only be done by letting his spirit take its course without restraint ; by these means, I think I shall discover much more of his real character under the title of his merchant, than I should under that of his father.

Enter a Sailor, ushering in several Black Servants, carrying Portmanteaus, Trunks, &c. L.H.D.

Sail. 'Save your honour! is your name Stockwell, pray?

Stock. It is.

Sail. Part of my master Belcour's baggage, an't please you: there's another cargo not far a-stern of us: and the coxswain has got charge of the dumb creatures.

Stock. Pr'ythee, friend what dumb creature do you speak of; has Mr. Belcour brought over a collection of wild beasts?

Sail. No, lord love him; no, not he; let me see; there's two green monkeys, a pair of grey parrots, a Jamaica sow and pigs, and a Mangrove dog; that's all.

Stock. Is that all?

Sail. Yes, your honour: Yes, that's all; bless his heart, a' might have brought over the whole island if he would; a' didn't leave a dry eye in it.

Stock. Indeed! Stukely, show them where to bestow their baggage. Follow that gentleman.

Sail. Come, bear a hand, my lads, bear a hand.

[Exeunt Stukely and Servants, R.H.]

Stock. If the principal tallies with his purveyors, he must be a singular spectacle in this place: he has a friend, however, in this sea-faring fellow; 'tis no bad prognostic of a man's heart, when his shipmates give him a good word. *[Exit, R.H.]*

SCENE II.—*A drawing Room.*

Enter Housekeeper and Servant, L.H.

Housek. Why, what a fuss does our good master put himself in about this West Indian! see what a bill

of fare I've been forced to draw out ; seven and nine, I'll assure you, and only a family dinner, as he calls it : why, if my lord mayor was expected, there couldn't be a greater to do about him.

Serv. I wish to my heart you had but seen the loads of trunks, boxes, and portmanteaus, he has sent hither. An ambassador's baggage, with all the smuggled goods of his family, does not exceed it.

Houcek. A fine pickle he'll put the house into : had he been master's own son, and a christian Englishman, there could not be more rout than there is about this Creolian, as they call 'em.

Serv. No matter for that ; he's very rich, and that's sufficient. They say, he has rum and sugar enough belonging to him, to make all the water in the Thames into punch. But I see my master's coming.

[*Exit Houskeeper, L.H.*]

Enter STOCKWELL, R.H.

Stock. Where is Mr. Belcour ? Who brought this note from him ?

Serv. A waiter from the London Tavern, sir ; he says the young gentleman is just dressed, and will be with you directly.

Stock. Show him in when he arrives.

Serv. I shall, sir, I'll have a peep at him first, however ; I've a great mind to see this outlandish spark. The sailor fellow says, he'll make rare doings among us. (*Aside.*)

Stock. You need not wait ; leave me.

[*Exit Servant, L.H.D.*]

Let me see. (*Reads.*)

Sir,—I write to you under the hands of the hair-dresser ; as soon as I have made myself decent, and slipped on some fresh clothes, I will have the honour of paying you my devoirs. Your's, BELCOUR.

He writes at his ease ; for he's unconscious to whom his letter is addressed ; but what a palpitation does it

throw my heart into; a father's heart! All the reports I ever received give me favourable impressions of his character; wild, perhaps, as the manner of his country is, but, I trust, not frantic or unprincipled.

Enter Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. Sir, the foreign gentleman is come. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Enter BELCOUR, L.H.D.

Stock. Mr. Belcour, I am rejoiced to see you: you are welcome to England!

Bel. I thank you heartily. good Mr. Stockwell; you and I have long conversed at a distance; now we are met; and the pleasure this meeting gives me, amply compensates for the perils I have run through in accomplishing it.

Stock. What perils, Mr. Belcour? I could not have thought you would have made a bad passage at this time o' year.

Bel. Nor did we: courier like, we came posting to your shores, upon the pinions of the swiftest gales that ever blew; 'tis upon English ground all my difficulties have arisen! 'tis the passage from the river side I complain of

Stock. Ay, indeed! What obstruction can you have met between this and the river side?

Bel. Innumerable! Your town is as full of defiles as the island of Corsica, and I believe they are as obstinately defended; so much hurry, bustle, and confusion, on your quays: so many sugar casks, porter butts, and common council men, in your streets, that unless a man marched with artillery in his front, 'tis more than the labour of Hercules can effect, to make any tolerable way through your town.

Stock. I am sorry you have been so incommoded.

Bel. Why, 'faith 'twas all my own fault; accustomed to a land of slaves, and out of patience with the whole

tribe of custom-house extortioners, boatmen, tide-waiters and water bailiffs, that beset me on all sides, worse than a swarm of musquitoes. I proceeded a little too roughly to brush them away with my rattan; the sturdy rogues took this in dudgeon, and beginning to rebel, the mob chose different sides, and a furious scuffle ensued; in the course of which, my person and apparel suffered so much, that I was obliged to step into the first tavern to refit before I could make my approaches in any decent trim.

Stock. All without is as I wish; dear nature, add the rest, I am happy. (*Aside.*) Well, Mr. Belcour, 'tis a rough sample you have had of my countrymen's spirit; but, I trust, you'll not think the worse of them for it.

Bel. Not at all, not at all; I like them the better. Was I only a visitor, I might, perhaps, wish them a little more tractable; but as a fellow subject, and a sharer in their freedom, I applaud their spirit, though I feel the effects of it in every bone of my skin.

Stock. That's well; I like that well. How gladly I could fall upon his neck, and own myself his father!

(*Aside.*)

Bel. Well, Mr. Stockwell, for the first time in my life, here am I in England; at the fountain head of pleasure, in the land of beauty, of arts, and elegancies. My happy stars have given me a good estate, and the conspiring winds have blown me hither to spend it.

Stock. To use it, not to waste it, I should hope; to treat it, Mr. Belcour, not as a vassal, over whom you have a wanton and a despotic power; but as a subject, which you are bound to govern, with a temperate and restrained authority.

Bel. True, sir, most truly said; mine's a commission, not a right; I am the offspring of distress, and every child of sorrow is my brother; while I have hands to hold, therefore, I will hold them open to mankind; but, sir, my passions are my masters; they take me where they will; and, oftentimes, they leave to reason and to virtue nothing but my wishes and my sighs.

Stock. Come, come, the man who can accuse, corrects himself.

Bel. Ah! that's an office I am weary of; I wish a friend would take it up; I would to heaven you had leisure for the employ; but, did you drive a trade to the four corners of the world, you would not find the task so toilsome as to keep me free from faults.

Stock. Well, I am not discouraged; this candour tells me I should not have the fault of self-conceit to combat; that at least, is not amongst the number.

Bel. No; if I knew that man on earth who thought more humbly of me than I do of myself, I would take up his opinion, and forego my own.

Stock. And were I to chose a pupil, it should be one of your complexion; so if you'll come along with me, we'll agree upon your admission, and enter on a course of lectures directly.

Bel. With all my heart. [*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE III.—*A room in lady Rusport's house.*

Enter LADY RUSPORT and MISS RUSPORT, L.H.

Lady R. Miss Rusport, I desire to hear no more of captain Dudley and his destitute family; not a shilling of mine shall ever cross the hands of any of them; because my sister chose to marry a beggar, am I bound to support him and his posterity?

Miss R. I think you are.

Lady R. You think I am! and pray where do you find the law that tells you so?

Miss R. I am not proficient enough to quote chapter and verse; but I take charity to be a main clause in the great statute of Christianity.

Lady R. I say charity, indeed! I am apt to think the distresses of old Dudley, and of his daughter into the bargain, would never break your heart, if there was not a certain young fellow of two-and-twenty in the

case; who, by the happy recommendation of a good person, and the brilliant appointments of an ensigncy, will, if I am not mistaken, cozen you out of a fortune of twice twenty thousand pounds, as soon as ever you are of age to bestow it upon him.

Miss R. A nephew of your ladyship's can never want any other recommendation with me: and if my partiality for Charles Dudley is acquitted by the rest of the world, I hope lady Rusport will not condemn me for it.

Lady R. I condemn you! I thank heaven, miss Rusport, I am no ways responsible for your conduct: nor is it any concern of mine how you dispose of yourself: you are not my daughter, and, when I married your father, poor sir Stephen Rusport, I found you a forward spoiled miss of fourteen, far above being instructed by me.

Miss R. Perhaps your ladyship calls this instruction.

Lady R. You are strangely pert; but 'tis no wonder: your mother, I'm told, was a fine lady; and according to the modern style of education you was brought up. It was not so in my young days; there was then some decorum in the world, some subordination, as the great Locke expresses it. Oh! 'twas an edifying sight, to see the regular deportment observed in our family; no giggling, no gossiping was going on there; my good father, sir Oliver Roundhead, never was seen to laugh himself, nor ever allowed it in his children.

Miss R. Ay; those were happy times, indeed.

Lady R. But, in this forward age, we have coquettes in the egg-shell, and philosophers in the cradle; girls of fifteen, that lead the fashion in new caps and new opinions, that have their sentiments and their sensations; and the idle fops encourage them in it: O my conscience, I wonder what it is the men can see in such babies.

Miss R. True, madam; but all men do not overlook the maturer beauties of your ladyship's age; witness your admired major Dennis O'Flaherty; there's an

example of some discernment; I declare to you, when your ladyship is by, the major takes no more notice of me than if I was part of the furniture of your chamber.

Lady R. The major, child, has travelled through various kingdoms and climates, and has more enlarged notions of female merit than falls to the lot of an English home-bread lover; in most other countries, no women on your side forty would ever be named in a polite circle.

Miss R. Right, madam; I've been told that in Vienna they have coquettes upon crutches, and Venusses in their grand climacteric; a lover there celebrates the wrinkles, not the dimples in his mistress's face. The major, I think, has served in the imperial army.

Lady R. Are you piqued, my young madam? Had my sister, Louisa, yielded to the addresses of one of major O'Flaherty's person and appearance, she would have had some excuse; but to run away as she did, at the age of sixteen too, with a man of old Dudley's sort—

Miss R. Was, in my opinion, the most venial trespass that ever girl of sixteen committed; of a noble family, an engaging person, strict honour, and sound understanding, what accomplishment was there wanting in captain Dudley, but that which the prodigality of his ancestors had deprived him of?

Lady R. They left him as much as he deserves; hasn't the old man captain's half-pay? And is not the son an ensign?

Miss R. An ensign! Alas, poor Charles! Would to heaven he knew what my heart feels and suffers for his sake.

Enter Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. Ensign Dudley, to wait upon your ladyship.

Lady R. Who! Dudley! What can have brought him to town.

Miss R. Dear madam, 'tis Charles Dudley; 'tis your nephew.

Lady R. Nephew! I renounce him as my nephew; sir Oliver renounced him as his grandson; wasn't he son of the eldest daughter, and only male descendant of sir Oliver; and didn't he cut him off with a shilling? Didn't the poor dear good old man leave his fortune to me, except a small annuity to my maiden sister, who spoiled her constitution with nursing him? And, depend upon it, not a penny of that fortune shall ever be disposed of otherwise than according to the will of the donor. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY, L.H.D.

So, young man, whence came you? What brings you to town?

Charles. If there is any offence in my coming to town, your ladyship is in some degree responsible for it, for part of my errand was to pay my duty here.

Lady R. And where is your father, child; and your sister? Are they in town too?

Charles. They are.

Lady R. Ridiculous! I don't know what people do in London, who have no money to spend in it.

Miss R. Dear madam, speak more kindly to your nephew; how can you oppress a youth of his sensibility?

Lady R. Miss Rusport, I insist upon your retiring to your apartment; when I want your advice, I'll send to you. (*Exit Miss Rusport, R.H.*) So you have put on a red coat too, as well as your father; 'tis plain what value you set upon the good advice sir Oliver used to give you: how often has he cautioned you against the army?

Charles. Had it pleased my grandfather to enable me to have obeyed his caution, I would have done it; but you well know how destitute I am; and 'tis not to be wondered at, if I prefer the service of my king to that of any other master.

Lady R. Well, well, take your own course; 'tis no concern of mine: you never consulted me.

Charles. I frequently wrote to your ladyship, but could obtain no answer; and, since my grandfather's

death, this is the first opportunity I have had of waiting upon you.

Lady R. I must desire you not to mention the death of that dear good man in my hearing; my spirits cannot support it.

Charles. I shall obey you: permit me to say, that, as that event has richly supplied you with the materials of bounty, the distresses of my family can furnish you with objects of it.

Lady R. The distresses of your family, child, are quite out of the question at present. Tell your father and your sister, I totally disapprove of their coming up to town.

Charles. Must I tell my father that, before your ladyship knows the motives that brought him hither? Allured by the offer of exchanging for a commission on full pay, the veteran, after thirty years service, prepares to encounter the fatal heats of Senegambia; but wants a small supply to equip him for the expedition.

Enter Servant, L.H.D.

Ser. Major O'Flaherty, to wait on your ladyship.

[Exit L.H.D.]

Enter MAJOR, L.H.D.

O'Fla. Spare your speeches, young man; don't you think her ladyship can take my word for that? I hope, madam, 'tis evidence enough of my being present, when I have the honour of telling you so myself.

Lady R. Major O'Flaherty, I am rejoiced to see you. Nephew Dudley, you perceive I'm engaged.

Charles. I shall not intrude upon your ladyship's more agreeable engagements. I presume I have my answer?

Lady R. Your answer child! What answer can you possibly expect? or how can your romantic father suppose that I am to abet him in all his idle and extravagant undertakings? Come, major, let me show you the way into my dressing-room; and let us leave this young adventurer to his meditation. *[Exit R.H.]*

O'Fla. I follow you my lady. Young gentleman, your obedient ! Upon my conscience, as fine a young fellow as I would wish to clap my eyes on : he might have answered my salute, however—well, let it pass ; Fortune, perhaps, frowns upon the poor lad ; she's a damn'd slippery lady, and very apt to jilt us poor fellows that wear cockades in our hats. Fare thee well, honey, whoever thou art. [*Exit R.H.*]

Charles. So much for the virtues of a puritan—out upon it ; her heart is flint ; yet that woman, that aunt of mine, without one worthy particle in her composition, would, I dare be sworn, as soon set her foot in a pesthouse, as in a playhouse.

Enter Miss Rusport, R.H.

Miss R. Stop, stay a little, Charles ; whither are you going in such haste ?

Charles. Madam ; miss Rusport ; what are your commands ?

Miss R. Why so reserved ? We had used to answer to no other names than those of Charles and Charlotte.

Charles. What ails you ? You have been weeping.

Miss R. No, no ; or if I have, your eyes are full too ; but I have a thousand things to say to you : before you go, tell me, I conjure you, where you are to be found : here, give me your direction ; write it upon the back of this visiting ticket—Have you a pencil ?

Charles. I have ; but why should you desire to find us out ? 'tis a poor little inconvenient place ; my sister has no apartment fit to receive you in.

Enter Servant, R.H.

Serv. Madam, my lady desires your company directly.

Miss R. I am coming—well, have you wrote it ? Give it me. O, Charles ! either you do not, or you will not understand me. [*Exeunt, Miss R. R.H. Charles, L.H.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Fulmer's House.*

FULMER *discovered seated*; MRS. FULMER *enters to him*, L.H.

Mrs. Ful. Why, how you sit, musing and moping, sighing and desponding ! I'm ashamed of you, Mr. Fulmer : is this the country you described to me, a second Eldorado, rivers of gold and rocks of diamonds ? You found me in a pretty snug retired way of life at Bologna, out of the noise and bustle of the world, and wholly at my ease : but, thank heaven, our partnership is revocable ; I am not your wedded wife, praised be my stars ! for what have we got, whom have we gulled but ourselves ? which of all your trains has taken fire ? even this poor expedient of your bookseller's shop seems abandoned ; for if a chance customer drops in, who is there, pray, to help him to what he wants ?

Ful. Patty, you know it is not upon slight grounds that I despair ; there had used to be a livelihood to be picked up in this country, both for the honest and dishonest : I have tried each walk, and am likely to starve at last : there is not a point to which the wit and faculty of man can turn, that I have not set mine to, but in vain ; I am beat through every quarter of the compass.

Mrs. Ful. Ah ! common efforts all : strike me a master-stroke, Mr. Fulmer, if you wish to make any figure in this country.

Ful. But where, how, and what ? I have blustered for prerogative ; I have bellowed for freedom ; I have offered to serve my country ; I have engaged to betray it ; a master-stroke truly ! why, I have talked treason, writ treason, and if a man can't live by that, he can live by nothing. Here I set up as a bookseller, why,

men leave off reading; and if I was to turn butcher, I believe, o' my conscience, they'd leave off eating.

CAPTAIN DUDLEY crosses the Stage, from
L.H. to R.H.U.E.

Mrs. Ful. Why, there now's your lodger, old captain Dudley, as he calls himself; there's no flint without fire, something might be struck out of him, if you had the wit to find the way.

Ful. Hang him, an old dry-skinned curmudgeon; you may as well think to get truth out of a courtier, or candour out of a critic: I can make nothing of him; besides he's poor, and therefore not for our purpose.

Mrs. Ful. The more fool he! Would any man be poor, that had such a prodigy in his possession?

Ful. His daughter, you mean; she is, indeed, uncommonly beautiful.

Mrs. Ful. Beautiful! Why, she need only be seen, to have the first men in the kingdom at her feet. Egad, I wish I had the leasing of her beauty; what would some of our young nabobs give?—

Ful. Hush! here comes the captain; good girl, leave us to ourselves, and let me try what I can make of him.

Mrs. Ful. Captain, truly! i'faith I'd have a regiment had I such a daughter, before I was three months older. [Exit, L.H.]

Enter CAPTAIN DUDLEY, R.H.

Ful. Captain Dudley, good morning to you.

Dud. Mr. Fulmer, I have borrowed a book from your shop; 'tis the sixth volume of my deceased friend Tristram: he is a flattering writer to us poor soldiers; and the divine story of le Fevre, which makes part of this book, in my opinion of it, does honour, not to its author only, but to human nature.

Ful. He's an author I keep in the way of trade, but one I never relished: he is much too loose and profligate for my taste.

Dud. That's being too severe: I hold him to be a moralist in the noblest sense; he plays, indeed, with

the fancy, and sometimes, perhaps, too wantonly; but while he thus designedly masks his main attack, he comes at once upon the heart; refines, amends it, softens it; beats down each selfish barrier from about it, and opens every sluice of pity and benevolence.

Ful. Well, sir, I shall not oppose your opinion; a favourite author is like a favourite mistress; and there, you know, captain, no man likes to have his taste arraigned.

Dud. Upon my word, sir, I don't know what a man likes in that case; 'tis an experiment I never made.

Ful. Sir!—Are you serious?

Dud. 'Tis of little consequence whether you think so.

Ful. What a formal old prig it is! (*Aside.*) I apprehend you, sir; you speak with caution; you are married?

Dud. I have been.

Ful. And this young lady, which accompanies you—

Dud. Passes for my daughter.

Ful. Passes for his daughter! humph!—(*Aside.*) She is exceedingly beautiful, finely accomplished, of a most enchanting shape and air.

Dud. You are much too partial; she has the greatest defect a woman can have.

Ful. How so, pray?

Dud. She has no fortune.

Ful. Rather say, that you have none; and that's a sore defect in one of your years, captain Dudley: you have served, no doubt?

Dud. Familiar coxcomb! But I'll humour him.

Ful. A close old fox! but I'll unkennel him. (*Aside.*)

Dud. Above thirty years I have been in the service, Mr. Fulmer.

Ful. I guessed as much; I laid it at no less: why, 'tis a wearisome time; 'tis an apprenticeship to a profession, fit only for a patriarch. But preferment must be closely followed: you never could have been so far behind-hand in the chase, unless you had palpably mis-

taken your way. You'll pardon me; but I begin to perceive you have lived in the world, not with it.

Dud. It may be so; and you perhaps can give me better counsel. I am now soliciting a favour; an exchange to a company on full pay; nothing more; and yet I meet a thousand bars to that; though without boasting, I should think the certificate of services which I sent in might have purchased that indulgence to me.

Ful. Who thinks or cares about them? Certificate of services, indeed! Send in a certificate of your fair daughter; carry her in your hand with you.

Dud. What! Who! My daughter! Carry my daughter! Well, and what then?

Ful. Why, then your fortune's made, that's all.

Dud. I understand you: and this you call knowledge of the world! Despicable knowledge; but, sirrah, I will have you know—(*Threatens him.*)

Ful. Help! Who's within? Would you strike me, sir? would you lift up your hand against a man in his own house?

Dud. In a church, if he dare insult the poverty of a man of honour.

Ful. Have a care what you do; remember there is such a thing in law as an assault and battery; ay, and such trifling forms as warrants and indictments.

Dud. Go, sir; you are too mean for my resentment: 'tis that, and not the law protects you. Hence!

Ful. An old, absurd, incorrigible blockhead! I'll be revenged of him. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY, R.H.

Charles. What is the matter, sir? Sure I heard an outcry as I entered the house.

Dud. Not unlikely; our landlord and his wife are for ever wrangling.—Did you find your aunt Rusport at home?

Charles. I did.

Dud. And what was your reception?

Charles. Cold as our poverty and her pride could make it.

Dud. You told her the pressing occasion I had for a small supply to equip me for this exchange; has she granted me the relief I asked?

Charles. Alas, sir, she has peremptorily refused it.

Dud. That's hard; that's hard, indeed! My petition was for a small sum; she has refused it, you say: well, be it so; I must not complain. Did you see the broker, about the insurance on my life?

Charles. There again I am the messenger of ill news; I can raise no money, so fatal is the climate; alas! that ever my father should be sent to perish in such a place!

LOUISA DUDLEY enters hastily, R.H.S.E.

Dud. Louisa, what's the matter? you seem frightened.

Lou. I am, indeed: coming from miss Rusport's, I met a young gentleman in the streets, who has beset me in the strangest manner.

Charles. Insufferable! Was he rude to you?

Lou. I cannot say he was absolutely rude to me, but he was very importunate to speak to me, and once or twice attempted to lift up my hat; he followed me to the corner of the street, and there I gave him the slip.

Dud. You must walk no more in the streets, child, without me, or your brother.

Lou. O Charles! miss Rusport desires to see you directly; lady Rusport is gone out, and she has something particular to say to you.

Charles. Have you any commands for me, sir?

Dud. None, my dear; by all means wait upon miss Rusport. Come, Louisa; I must desire you to get up to your chamber, and compose yourself.

[Exeunt, Charles, R.H. Dudley and Louisa, L.H.]

Enter BELCOUR, after peeping in at the door, R.H.S.E.

Bel. Not a soul, as I'm alive. Why, what an odd

sort of a house is this ! Confound the little jilt, she has fairly given me the slip. A plague upon this London, I shall have no luck in it : such a crowd, and such a hurry, and such a number of shops, and one so like the other, that whether the wench turned into this house or the next, or whether she went up stairs or down stairs (for there's a world above and a world below, it seems,) I declare I know no more than if I was in the Blue Mountains. In the name of all the devils at once, why did she run away ? If every handsome girl I meet in this town is to lead me such a wildgoose chase, I had better have stayed in the torrid zone : I shall be wasted to the size of a sugar cane : what shall I do ? give the chase up ? hang it, that's cowardly : shall I, a true-born son of Phœbus, suffer this little nimble-footed Daphne to escape me ?—'Forbid it, honour, and forbid it, love.' Hush ! hush ! here she comes ! Oh ! the devil ! What tawdry thing have we got here ?

Enter MRS. FULMER, L.H.

Mrs. Ful. Your humble servant, sir.

Bel. Your humble servant, madam.

Mrs. Ful. A fine summer's day, sir.

Bel. Yes, ma'am ; and so cool, that, if the calendar didn't call it July, I should swear it was January.

Mrs. Ful. Sir !

Bel. Madam !

Mrs. Ful. Do you wish to speak to Mr. Fulmer, sir ?

Bel. Mr. Fulmer, madam ? I hav'n't the honour of knowing such a person.

Mrs. Ful. No ! I'll be sworn, you have not ; thou art much too pretty a fellow, and too much of a gentleman, to be an author thyself, or to have any thing to say to those that are so. 'Tis the captain, I suppose, you are waiting for.

Bel. I rather suspect it is the captain's wife.

Mrs. Ful. The captain has no wife, sir.

Bel. No wife ! I'm heartily sorry for it ; for then she's his mistress ; and that I take to be the more desperate case of the two. Pray, madam, wasn't there

a lady just now turned into your house? 'Twas with her I wished to speak.

Mrs. Ful. What sort of a lady, pray?

Bel. One of the loveliest sort my eyes ever beheld; young, tall, fresh, fair; in short, a goddess.

Mrs. Ful. Nay, but dear, dear sir, now I'm sure you flatter; for 'twas me you followed into the shop door this minute.

Bel. You! No, no, take my word for it, it was not you, madam.

Mrs. Ful. But what is it you laugh at?

Bel. Upon my soul, I ask your pardon; but it was not you, believe me; be assured it wasn't.

Mrs. Ful. Well, sir, I shall not contend for the honour of being noticed by you; I hope you think you wouldn't have been the first man that noticed me in the streets; however, this I'm positive of, that no living woman but myself has entered these doors this morning.

Bel. Why, then, I'm mistaken in the house, that's all; for it is not humanly possible I can be so far out in the lady. (*Going.*)

Mrs. Ful. Coxcomb—But hold—a thought occurs; as sure as can be, he has seen Miss Dudley. A word with you, young gentleman; come back.

Bel. Well, what's your pleasure?

Mrs. Ful. You seem greatly captivated with this young lady; are you apt to fall in love thus at first sight?

Bel. Oh, yes: 'tis the only way I can ever fall in love; any man may tumble into a pit by surprise; none but a fool would walk into one by choice.

Mrs. Ful. You are a hasty lover, it seems; have you spirit to be a generous one? They, that will please the eye, mustn't spare the purse.

Bel. Try me: put me to the proof; bring me to an interview with the dear girl that has thus captivated me, and see whether I have spirit to be grateful.

Mrs. Ful. But how, pray, am I to know the girl you have set your heart on?

Bel. By an undescribable grace, that accompanies every look and action that falls from her; there can be but one such woman in the world, and nobody can mistake that one.

Mrs. Ful. Well, if I should stumble upon this angel in my walks, where am I to find you? What's your name?

Bel. Upon my soul I can't tell you my name?

Mrs. Ful. Not tell me! Why so?

Bel. Because I don't know what it is myself; as yet I have no name.

Mrs. Ful. No name!

Bel. None; a friend, indeed, lent me his; but he forbade me to use it on any unworthy occasion.

Mrs. Ful. But where is your place of abode?

Bel. I have none; I never slept a night in England in my life. (*Retires.*)

Mrs. Ful. Hey day!

Enter FULMER, L.H.

Ful. A fine case, truly, in a free country; a pretty pass things are come to, if a man is to be assaulted in his own house.

Mrs. Ful. Who has assaulted you, my dear?

Ful. Who! why this captain Drawcansir, this old Dudley, my lodger; but I'll unlodge him; I'll unharbour him, I warrant.

Mrs. Ful. Hush! hush! Hold your tongue, man: pocket the affront, and be quiet; I've a scheme on foot will pay you a hundred beatings. (*Aside to Ful.*) Why you surprise me, Fulmer; captain Dudley assault you! Impossible.

Ful. Nay, I can't call it an absolute assault; but he threatened me.

Mrs. Ful. Oh, was that all? I thought how it would turn out—A likely thing, truly, for a person of his obliging, compassionate turn: no, no, poor captain Dudley, he has sorrows and distresses enough of his own to employ his spirits, without setting them against other people. Make it up as fast as you can: watch

this gentleman out; follow him wherever he goes, and bring me word who and what he is; be sure you don't lose sight of him; I've other business in hand.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Bel. Pray, sir, what sorrows and distresses have befallen this old gentleman you speak of?

Ful. Poverty, disappointment, and all the distresses attendant thereupon: sorrow enough of all conscience: I soon found how it was with him, by his way of living, low enough of all reason; but what I overheard this morning put it out of all doubt.

Bel. What did you overhear this morning?

Ful. Why, it seems he wants to join his regiment, and has been beating the town over to raise a little money for that purpose upon his pay; but the climate, I find, where he is going is so unhealthy, that nobody can be found to lend him any.

Bel. Why then your town is a damned good-for-nothing town: and I wish I had never come into it.

Ful. That's what I say, sir; the hard-heartedness of some folks is unaccountable. There's an old lady Rusport, a near relation of this gentleman's; she lives hard by here, opposite to Stockwell's the great merchant; he sent to her a-begging, but to no purpose; though she is as rich as a Jew, she would not furnish him with a farthing.

Bel. Is the captain at home?

Ful. He is up stairs, sir.

Bel. Will you take the trouble to desire him to step higher! I want to speak to him.

Ful. I'll send him to you directly. I don't know what to make of this young man; but, if I live, I will find him out, or know the reason why. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Bel. I've lost the girl, it seems, that's clear: she was the first object of my pursuit; but the case of this poor officer touches me; and, after all, there may be as much true delight in rescuing a fellow creature from distress, as there would be in plunging one into it—But let me see: its a point that must be managed with some delicacy.—Apropos! there's pen and ink—I've struck

upon a method that will do. (*Writes.*) Ay, ay, this is the very thing: 'twas devilish lucky I happened to have these bills about me. There, there, fare you well! I'm glad to be rid of you; you stood a chance of being worse applied, I can tell you.

(*Incloses and seals the paper.*)

FULMER brings in DUDLEY, L.H.

Ful. That's the gentleman, sir. I shall make bold, however, to lend an ear. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Dud. Have you any commands for me, sir?

Bel. Your name is Dudley, sir?—

Dud. It is.

Bel. You command a company, I think, captain Dudley?

Dud. I did: I am now upon half-pay.

Bel. You have served some time?

Dud. A pretty many years; long enough to see some people of more merit, and better interest than myself, made general officers.

Bel. Their merit I may have some doubt of; their interest I can readily give credit to; there is little promotion to be looked for in your profession, I believe, without friends, captain?

Dud. I believe so too: have you any other business with me, may I ask?

Bel. Your patience for a moment. I was informed you was about to join your regiment in distant quarters abroad.

Dud. I have been soliciting an exchange to a company of full pay, quartered at James' Fort, in Senegambia; but I'm afraid I must drop the undertaking.

Bel. Why so, pray?

Dud. Why so, sir? 'Tis a home question, for a perfect stranger to put; there is something very particular in all this.

Bel. If it is not impertinent, sir, allow me to ask you what reason you have for despairing of success?

Dud. Why, really, sir, mine is an obvious reason, for a soldier to have—Want of money; simply that.

Bel. May I beg to know the sum you have occasion for?

Dud. Truly, sir, I cannot exactly tell you on a sudden; nor is it, I suppose, of any great consequence to you to be informed: but I should guess, in the gross, that two hundred pounds would serve.

Bel. And you find a difficulty in raising that sum upon your pay? 'tis done every day.

Dud. The nature of the climate makes it difficult; I can get no one to insure my life.

Bel. Oh! that's a circumstance may make for you, as well as against; in short, captain Dudley, it so happens, that I can command the sum of two hundred pounds: seek no further; I'll accommodate you with it upon easy terms.

Dud. Sir! do I understand you rightly?—I beg your pardon; but am I to believe that you are in earnest?

Bel. What is your surprise? Is it an uncommon thing for a gentleman to speak truth? Or is it incredible that one fellow-creature should assist another?

Dud. I ask your pardon—May I beg to know to whom?—Do you propose this in the way of business?

Bel. Entirely: I have no other business on earth.

Dud. Indeed! you are not a broker, I'm persuaded.

Bel. I am not.

Dud. Nor an army agent, I think?

Bel. I hope you will not think the worse of me for being neither; in short, sir, if you will peruse this paper, it will explain to you who I am, and upon what terms I act; while you read it, I will step home, and fetch the money: and we will conclude the bargain without loss of time. In the mean while, good day to you.

[*Exit hastily, R.H.*]

Dud. Humph! there's something very odd in all this—let me see what we've got here—This paper is to tell me who he is, and what are his terms: in the name of wonder, why he has sealed it? Hey-day! what's here? Two bank notes, of a hundred each! I can't compre-

hend what this means. Hold ; here's a writing ; perhaps that will show me. *Accept this trifle ; pursue your fortune, and prosper.* Am I in a dream ? is this a reality ?

Enter MAJOR O'FLAHERTY, R.H.

O' Fla. 'Save you, my dear ! Is it you now that are captain Dudley, I would ask ? [*Exit* Dudley, R.H. Whuh ! What's the hurry the man's in ? If 'tis the lad that run out of the shop you would overtake, you might as well stay where you are ; by my soul he's as nimble as a Croat ; you are ; a full hour's march in his rear—Ay faith, you may as well turn back, and give over the pursuit.

Re-enter DUDLEY, R.H.

Well, captain Dudley, if that's your name, there's a letter for you. Read, man ; read it ; and I'll have a word with you after you have done.

Dud. More miracles on foot ! So, so, from lady Rusport.

O' Fla. You're right ; it's from her ladyship.

Dud. Well sir, I have cast my eye over it ; 'tis short and peremptory ; are you acquainted with the contents ?

O' Fla. Not at all, my dear ; not at all.

Dud. Have you any message from lady Rusport ?

O' Fla. Not a syllable, honey : only when you've digested the letter, I've a little bit of a message to deliver you from myself.

Dud. And may I beg to know who yourself is ?

O' Fla. Dennis O'Flaherty, at your service ; a poor major of grenadiers—nothing better.

Dud. So much for your name and title, sir ; now be so good as to favour me with your message.

O' Fla. Why then, captain, I must tell you, I have promised lady Rusport you shall do whatever it is she bids you to do in that letter there.

Dud. Aye, indeed : have you undertaken so much, major, without knowing either what she commands, or what I can perform ?

O' Fla. That's your concern, my dear, not mine; I must keep my word, you know.

Dud. Or else, I suppose, you and I must measure swords.

O' Fla. Upon my soul you've hit it.

Dud. That would hardly answer to either of us: you and I have, probably, had enough of fighting in our time, before now.

O' Fla. Faith and troth, master Dudley, you may say that; 'tis thirty years, come the time, that I have followed the trade, and in a pretty many countries.—Let me see—In the war before last, I served in the Irish brigade, d'ye see; there, after bringing off the French monarch, I left his service, with a British bullet in my body, and this riband in my button-hole. Last war I followed the fortunes of the German eagle, in the corps of grenadiers; there I had my bellyful of fighting, and a plentiful scarcity of every thing else. After six-and-twenty engagements, great and small, I went off with this gash on my skull, and a kiss of the empress queen's sweet hand, (heaven bless it!) for my pains. Since the peace, my dear, I took a little turn with the confederates there in Poland—but such another set of madcaps!—by the lord Harry, I never knew what it was they were scuffling about.

Dud. Well, major, I won't add another action to the list; you shall keep your promise with lady Rusport: she requires me to leave London; I shall go in a few days, and you may take what credit you please from my compliance.

O' Fla. Give me your hand, my dear boy! this will make her my own; when that's the case, we shall be brothers, you know, and we'll share her fortune between us.

Dud. Not so, major, the man who marries lady Rusport, will have a fair title to her whole fortune without division. But, I hope, your expectations of prevailing are founded upon good reasons.

O' Fla. Upon the best grounds in the world; first,

I think she will comply, because she is a woman; secondly, I am persuaded she won't hold out long, because she is a widow; and thirdly, I make sure of her, because I have married five wives (*en militaire*, captain,) and never failed yet; and for what I know, they are all alive and merry at this very hour.

Dud. Well, sir, go on, and prosper; if you can inspire lady Rusport with half your charity, I shall think you deserve all her fortune; at present, I must beg your excuse: good morning to you. [*Exit, L.H.*]

O'Fla. A good sensible man, and very much of a soldier. I did not care if I was better acquainted with him: but 'tis an awkward kind of country for that; the English, I observe are close friends, but distant acquaintance. I suspect the old lady has not been over generous to poor Dudley; I shall give her a little touch about that: upon my soul, I know but one excuse a person can have for giving nothing, and that is, like myself, having nothing to give. [*Exit, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Lady Rusport's House. A Dressing-room.*

Enter Miss RUSPORT, and LUCY, R.H.

Miss R. Well, Lucy, you've dislodged the old lady at last; but methought you was a tedious time about it.

Lucy. A tedious time, indeed; I think they who have least to spare, contrive to throw the most away; I thought I should never have got her out of the house: then, madam, this being a visit of great ceremony to a person of distinction at the west end of the town, the old state chariot was brought forth on the occasion, with strict charges to dress out the box with the leopard skin hammercloth.

Miss R. Yes, and to hang the false tails on the miserable stumps of the old crawling cattle; well, well,

pray heaven, the old crazy affair don't break down again with her; at least till she gets to her journies end.—But where's Charles Dudley? Run down dear girl, and be ready to let him in; I think he's as long in coming as she was in going.

Lucy. Why, indeed, madam, you seem the more alert of the two, I must say. [Exit, L.H.D.]

Miss R. Now the deuce take the girl, for putting that notion into my head: I am sadly afraid Dudley does not like me; so much encouragement as I have given him to declare himself, I never could get a word from him on the subject! This may be very honourable, but upon my life it's very provoking. By the way, I wonder how I look to-day: Oh! shockingly! hideously pale! like a witch!—This is the old lady's glass, and she has left some of her wrinkles on it.—How frightfully have I put on my cap! all awry! and my hair dressed so unbecoming! altogether, I'm a most complete fright—

Enter CHARLES, unobserved, L.H.D.

Charles. That I deny.

Miss R. Ah!

Charles. Quarrelling with your glass, cousin? Make it up, make it up, and be friends; it cannot compliment you more than by reflecting you as you are.

Miss R. Well, I vow, my dear Charles, that is delightfully said, and deserves my very best curt'sy; your flattery, like a rich jewel, has a value not only from its superior lustre, but from its extraordinary scarceness: I verily think, this is the only civil speech you ever directed to my person in your life.

Charles. And I ought to ask pardon of your good sense, for having done it now.

Miss R. Nay, now you relapse again: don't you know, if you keep well with a woman on the great score of beauty, she'll never quarrel with you on the trifling article of good sense?—But any thing serves to fill up a dull, yawning hour, with an insipid cousin; you have

brighter moments, and warmer spirits, for the dear girl of your heart.

Charles. Oh, fie upon you ! fie upon you !

Miss R. You blush, and the reason is apparent :—you are a novice at hypocrisy ; but no practice can make a visit of ceremony pass for a visit of choice : love is ever before its time ; friendship is apt to lag a little after it.—Pray, Charles, did you make any extraordinary haste hither ?

Charles. By your question, I sec, you acquit me of the impertinence of being in love.

Miss R. But why impertinence ? Why the impertinence of being in love ?—You have one language for me, Charles, and another for the woman of your affection.

Charles. You are mistaken—the woman of my affection shall never hear any other language from me ; than what I use to you.

Miss R. I am afraid, then, you'll never make yourself understood by her.

Charles. It is not fit I should ; there is no need of love to make me miserable ; 'tis wretchedness enough to be a beggar.

Miss R. A beggar do you call yourself ! O, Charles Charles, rich in every merit and accomplishment, whom may you not aspire to ? And why think you so unworthy of your sex, as to conclude there is not one to be found with sense to discern your virtue, and generosity to reward it ?

Charles. You distress me ;—I must beg to hear no more.

Miss R. Well, I can be silent.—Thus does he always serve me, whenever I am about to disclose myself to him. (*Aside.*)

Charles. Why do you not banish me and my misfortunes for ever from your thoughts ?

Miss R. Ay, wherefore do I not, since you never allowed me a place in yours ?—But go, sir : I have no right to stay you ; go where your heart directs you ; go to the happy, the distinguished, fair one.

Charles. Now, by all that's good, you do me wrong; there is no such fair one for me to go to; nor have I an acquaintance among the sex, yourself excepted, which answers to that description.

Miss R. Indeed.

Charles. In very truth—there, then, let us drop the subject.—May you be happy, though I never can!

Miss R. O Charles! give me your hand; if I have offended you, I ask your pardon: you have been long acquainted with my temper, and know how to bear with its infirmities.

Charles. Thus, my dear Charlotte, let us seal our reconciliation! (*Kissing her hand.*) Bear with thy infirmities! By heaven I know not any one failing in thy whole composition except that of too great a partiality for an undeserving man.

Miss R. And you are now taking the very course to augment that failing.—A thought strikes me;—I have a commission that you must absolutely execute for me;—I have immediate occasion for the sum of two hundred pounds; you know my fortune is shut up till I am of age: take this paltry box (it contains my ear-rings and some other baubles I have no use for), carry it to our opposite neighbour, Mr. Stockwell (I don't know where else to apply), leave it as a deposit in his hands, and beg him to accommodate me with the sum.

Charles. Dear Charlotte, what are you about to do? How can you possibly want two hundred pounds?

Miss R. How can I possibly do without it, you mean? Doesn't every lady want two hundred pounds?—Perhaps, I have lost it at play—perhaps—I mean to win as much to it—perhaps, I want it for two hundred different uses.

Charles. Pooh! pooh! all this is nothing; don't I know you never play?

Miss R. You mistake; I have a spirit to set, not only this trifle, but my whole fortune upon a stake; therefore make no wry faces, but do as I bid you. You will find Mr. Stockwell a very honourable gentleman.

Enter LUCY, in haste, L.H.D.

Lucy. Dear madam, as I live, here comes the old lady in a hackney coach.

Miss R. The old chariot has given her a second tumble:—away with you! you know your way out, without meeting her. Take the box and do as I desire you.

Charles. I must not dispute your orders. Farewell!

[*Exeunt, Charles, L.H. and Miss Rusport, R.H.*]

Enter LADY RUSPORT, L.H.D. leaning on MAJOR O'FLAHERTY'S arm.

O'Fla. Rest yourself upon my arm: never spare it: 'tis strong enough; it has stood harder service than you can put it to.

Lucy. Mercy upon me, what is the matter? I am frightened out of my wits—Has your ladyship had an accident?

Lady R. O, Lucy, the most untoward one in nature, I know not how I shall repair it.

O'Fla. Never go about to repair it, my lady; even build a new one; 'twas but a crazy piece of business at best.

Lucy. Bless me, is the old chariot broke down with you again?

Lady R. Broke, child! I don't know what might have been broke, if, by great good fortune, this obliging gentleman had not been at hand to assist me.

Lucy. Dear madam let me run and fetch you a cup of the cordial drops.

Lady R. Do, Lucy. [*Exit Lucy, R.H.*] Alas, sir! ever since I lost my husband, my poor nerves have been shook to pieces:—there hangs his beloved picture; that precious relic, and a plentiful jointure, is all that remains to console me for the best of men.

O'Fla. Let me see—i'faith a comely personage; by his fur cloak, I suppose he was in the Russian service and, by the gold chain round his neck I should guess, he had been honoured with the order of St. Catherine.

Lady R. No, no, he meddled with no St. Catherines—that's the habit he wore in his mayoralty; sir Stephen was lord mayor of London—but he is gone, and has left me, a poor, weak, solitary widow, behind him.

O'Fla. By all means, then, take a strong, able, hearty man, to repair his loss:—if such a plain fellow as one Dennis O'Flaherty can please you, I think I may venture to say, without any disparagement to the gentleman in the fur gown there—

Lady R. What are you going to say? Don't shock my ears with any comparisons, I desire.

O'Fla. Not I, my soul; I don't believe there's any comparison in the case.

Re-enter LUCY, R.H. with a bottle and glass.

Lady R. Oh, are you come? Give me the drops—I'm all in a flutter. (*Lucy fills, Lady R. drinks.*)

O'Fla. Hark ye, (*Crosses behind to R.H.*) sweetheart, what are those same drops? Have you any more left in the bottle? I didn't care if I took a little sip of them myself.

Lucy. Oh, sir, they are called the cordial restorative elixir, or the nervous golden drops; they are only for ladies' cases.

O'Fla. Yes, yes, my dear, there are gentlemen as well as ladies, that stand in need of those same golden drops; they'd suit my case to a tittle.

Lady R. Well, major, did you give old Dudley my letter, and will the silly man do as I bid him, and be gone.

O'Fla. You are obeyed—he's on his march.

Lady R. That's well; you have managed this matter to perfection; I didn't think he would have been so easily prevailed upon.

O'Fla. At the first word: no difficulty in life; 'twas the very thing he was determined to do, before I came; I never met with a more obliging gentleman.

Lady R. Well, 'tis no matter; so I am but rid of him, and his distresses: would you believe it, major O'Flaherty, it was but this morning he sent a-begging

to me for money to fit him out upon some wildgoose expedition to the coast of Africa, I know not where?

O'Fla. Well, you sent him what he wanted.

Lady R. I sent him what he deserved, a flat refusal.

O'Fla. You refused him?

Lady R. Most undoubtedly.

O'Fla. You sent him nothing?

Lady R. Not a shilling.

O'Fla. Good morning to you—Your servant—

(*Crosses to L.H. Going.*)

Lady R. Hey day! what ails the man? Where are you going?

O'Fla. Out of your house, before the roof falls on my head—to poor Dudley, to share the little modicum, that thirty years hard service has left me; I wish it was more, for his sake.

Lady R. Very well, sir; take your course; I sha'n't attempt to stop you; I shall survive it; it will not break my heart, if I never see you more.

O'Fla. Break your heart! No, o'my conscience will it not.—You preach, and you pray, and you turn up your eyes, and all the while you are as hard-hearted as a hyena—A hyena, truly! by my soul, there isn't in the whole creation so savage an animal as a human creature without pity!

[*Exit, L.H.D.*

Lady R. A hyena, truly!

[*Exit, R.H.D.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A room in Stockwell's House.*

Enter STOCKWELL and BELCOUR, R.H.

Stock. Gratify me so far, however, Mr. Belcour, as to see miss Rusport; carry her the sum she wants, and

return the poor girl her box of diamonds, which Dudley left in my hands : you know what to say on the occasion better than I do ; that part of your commission I leave to your own discretion, and you may season it with what gallantry you think fit.

Bel. You could not have pitched upon a greater bungler at gallantry than myself, if you had rummaged every company in the city, and the whole court of aldermen into the bargain :—part of your errand, however, I will do ; but whether it shall be with an ill grace or a good one, depends upon the caprice of a moment, the humour of the lady, the mode of our meeting, and a thousand undefinable small circumstances, that, nevertheless, determine us upon all the great occasions of life.

Stock. I persuade myself you will find miss Rusport an ingenuous, worthy, animated girl.

Bel. Why, I like her the better, as a woman ; but name her not to me as a wife ! No, if ever I marry, it must be a stayed, sober, considerate damsel, with blood in her veins as cold as a turtle's : quick of scent as a vulture when danger's in the wind ; wary and sharp-sighted as a hawk when treachery is on foot : with such a companion at my elbow, for ever whispering in my ear—Have a care of this man, he's a cheat ; don't go near that woman, she's a jilt ; overhead there's a scaffold, underfoot there's a well. Oh, sir ! such a woman might lead me up and down this great city without difficulty or danger ; but with a girl of miss Rusport's complexion, heaven and earth, sir ! we should be duped, undone, and distracted, in a fortnight.

Stock. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Why, you are become wondrous circumspect of a sudden, pupil : and if you can find such a prudent damsel as you describe, you have my consent—only beware how you choose : discretion is not the reigning quality amongst the fine ladies of the present time : and, I think, in miss Rusport's particular, I have given you no bad counsel.

Bel. Well, well, if you'll fetch me the jewels, I believe, I can undertake to carry them to her : but as

it to miss Rusport, you'll have no further trouble on that score.

Bel. Ah! sir, the letter which I have been reading, disqualifies me for delivering the letter, which you have been writing; I have other game on foot; the loveliest girl my eyes ever feasted upon is started in view, and the world cannot now divert me from pursuing her.

Stock. Hey day! What has turned you thus on a sudden?

Bel. A woman; one that can turn, and overturn me and my tottering resolutions every way she will.—Oh, sir, if this is folly in me, you must rail at nature: you must chide the sun, that was vertical at my birth, and would not wink upon my nakedness, but swaddled me in the broadest, hottest glare of his meridian beams.

Stock. Mere rhapsody: mere childish rhapsody: the libertine's familiar plea—Nature made us, 'tis true, but we are the responsible creatures of our own faults and follies.

Bel. Sir!

Stock. Slave of every face you meet, some hussy has inveigled you; some handsome profligate (the town is full of them) and, when once fairly bankrupt in constitution as well as fortune, nature no longer serves as your excuse for being vicious, necessity, perhaps, will stand your friend, and you'll reform.

Bel. You are severe.

Stock. It fits me to be so—it well becomes a father—I would say, a friend—How strangely I forgot myself! (*Aside.*)—How difficult it is to counterfeit indifference, and put a mask upon the heart?

Bel. How could you tempt me so? Had you not inadvertently dropped the name of father, I fear our friendship, short as it has been, would scarce have held me—But even your mistake I reverence—Give me your hand—'tis over.

Stock. Generous young man! because I bore you the affection of a father, I rashly took up the authority of one. I ask your pardon—pursue your course; I have

no right to stop it—What would you have me do with these things?

Bel. This, if I might advise; carry the money to miss Rusport immediately; never let generosity wait for its materials; that part of the business presses. Give me the jewels: I'll find an opportunity of delivering them into her hands; and your visit may pave the way for my reception. [*Exit. L.H.*]

Stock. Be it so; good morning to you. Farewell, advice! Away goes he upon the wing for pleasure. What various passions he awakens in me! He pains, yet pleases me; affrights, offends, yet grows upon my heart. His very failings set him off—for ever trespassing, for ever atoning, I almost think he would not be so perfect, were he free from fault; I must dissemble longer; and yet how painful the experiment!—Even now he's gone upon some wild adventure; and who can tell what mischief may befall him; O nature, what it is to be a father! [*Exit. R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Fulmer's House.*

Enter FULMER and MRS. FULMER, L.H.

Ful. I tell you, Patty, you are a fool, to think of bringing him and miss Dudley together; 'twill ruin every thing, and blow your whole scheme up to the moon at once.

Mrs. Ful. Why, sure, Mr. Fulmer, I may be allowed to rear a chicken of my own hatching, as they say. Who first sprung the thought, but I, pray? Who first contrived the plot? Who proposed the letter, but I, I?

Ful. And who dogged the gentleman home? Who found out his name, fortune, connexion: that he was a West Indian, fresh landed, and full of cash; a gull to our heart's content; a hot-brained, headlong spark,

that would run into our trap, like a wheatear under a turf, but I, I, I?

Mrs. Ful. Hark! he's come; disappear, march; and leave the field open to my machination.

[*Exit Fulmer, L.H.*]

Enter BELCOUR, R.H.

Bel. O, thou dear minister to my happiness, let me embrace thee! Why, thou art my polar star, my propitious constellation, by which I navigate my impatient bark into the port of pleasure and delight.

Mrs. Ful. Oh, you men are sly creatures! Do you remember now, you cruel, what you said to me this morning?

Bel. All a jest, a frolic; never think on't; bury it for ever in oblivion: thou! why, thou art all over nectar and ambrosia, powder of pearl and odour of roses; thou hast the youth of Hebe, the beauty of Venus, and the pen of Sappho; but in the name of all that's lovely, where's the lady? I expected to find her with you.

Mrs. Ful. No doubt you did, and these raptures were designed for her; but where have you loitered? the lady's gone—you are too late; girls of her sort are not to be kept waiting, like negro slaves in your sugar plantations.

Bel. Gone! whither is she gone? tell me, that I may follow her. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Mrs. Ful. Hold, hold; not so fast, young gentleman, this is a case of some delicacy; should captain Dudley know that I introduced you to his daughter, he is a man of such scrupulous honour—

Bel. What do you tell me! is she daughter to the old gentleman I met here this morning?

Mrs. Ful. The same; him you was so generous to.

Bel. There's an end of the matter then at once; it shall never be said of me, that I took advantage of the father's necessities to trepan the daughter. (*Going, R.H.*)

Mrs. Ful. So, so, I've made a wrong cast; he's one

of your conscientious sinners, I find ; but I won't lose him thus. (*Aside.*)—Ha ! ha ! ha !

Bel. What is it you laugh at ?

Mrs. Ful. Your absolute inexperience ; have you lived so very little time in this country, as not to know that, between young people of equal ages, the term of sister often is a cover for that of mistress ? 'This young lady is, in that sense of the word, sister to young Dudley, and consequently daughter to my old lodger.

Bel. Indeed ! are you serious ?

Mrs. Ful. Can you doubt it ? I must have been pretty well assured of that, before I invited you hither.

Bel. That's true ; she cannot be a woman of honour, and Dudley is an unconscionable young rogue, to think of keeping one fine girl in pay, by raising contributions on another : he shall therefore give her up : she is a dear, bewitching, mischievous little devil, and he shall positively give her up.

Mrs. Ful. Ay, now the freak has taken you again : I say give her up ? there's one way, indeed, and certain of success.

Bel. What's that ?

Mrs. Ful. Out-bid him, never dream of out-blustering him. All things, then will be made easy enough ; let me see ; some little genteel present to begin with : what have you got about you ? Ay, search ; I can bestow it to advantage, there's no time to be lost.

Bel. Hang it, confound it ; a plague upon't ; say I ! I hav'n't a guinea left in my pocket : I parted from my whole stock here this morning, and have forgot to supply myself since.

Mrs. Ful. Mighty well ; let it pass then : there's an end ; think no more of the lady, that's all.

Bel. Distraction ! think no more of her ? let me only step home, and provide myself ; I'll be back with you in an instant.

Mrs. Ful. Pooh, pooh ! that's a wretched shift ; have you nothing of value about you ? Money's a coarse, slovenly vehicle, fit only to bribe electors in a borough ;

there are more graceful ways of purchasing a lady's favours; rings, trinkets, jewels!

Bel. Jewels; gadso, I protest I had forgot: I have a case of jewels; but they won't do, I must not part from them; no, no, they are appropriated; they are none of my own.

Mrs. Ful. Let me see, let me see! Ay, now, this were something like: pretty creatures, how they sparkle! these would ensure success.

Bel. Indeed!

Mrs. Ful. These would make her your own for ever.

Bel. Then the deuce take them, for belonging to another person; I could find in my heart to give them the girl, and swear I've lost them.

Mrs. Ful. Ay, do, say they were stolen out of your pocket.

Bel. No, hang it, that's dishonourable; here, give me the paltry things, I'll write you an order on my merchant, for double their value.

Mrs. Ful. An order! No order for me! no orders upon merchants, with their value received and three day's grace; their noting, protesting, and endorsing, and all their counting-house formalities; I'll have nothing to do with them; leave your diamonds with me, and give your order for the value of them to the owner: the money would be as good as the trinkets, I warrant you.

Bel. Hey! how! I never thought of that; but a breach of trust; 'tis impossible: I never can consent, therefore give me the jewels back again.

Mrs. Ful. Take them; I am now to tell you, the lady is in this house.

Bel. In this house?

Mrs. Ful. Yes, sir, in this very house; but what of that? you have got what you like better: your toys, your trinkets; go, go; Oh you are a man of notable spirit, are you not?

Bel. Provoking creature! bring me to the sight of the dear girl, and dispose of me as you think fit.

Mrs. Ful. And of the diamonds too?

Bel. Damn them, I would there was not such a bauble in naature! But, come, come, dispatch; if I had the throne of Delhi, I should give it to her.

Mrs. Ful. Swear to me then, that you will keep within bounds; remember she passes for the sister of young Dudley. Oh! if you come to your flights and your rhapsodies, she'll be off in an instant.

Bel. Never fear me.

Mrs. Ful. You must expect to hear her talk of her father, as she calls him, and her brother, and your bounty to her family.

Bel. Ay, ay, never mind what she talks of, only bring her.

Mrs. Ful. You'll be prepared upon that head?

Bel. I shall be prepared, never fear: away with you.

Mrs. Ful. But, hold, I had forgot: not a word of the diamonds; leave that matter to my management.

Bel. Hell and vexation! Get out of the room, or I shall run distracted. [*Exit Mrs. Ful. L.H.*] Of a certain, Belcour, thou art born to be the fool of woman! sure no man sins with so much repentance, or repents with so little amendment, as I do. I cannot give away another person's property, honour forbids me; and I positively cannot give up the girl; love, passion, constitution, every thing protests against that. How shall I decide? I cannot bring myself to break a trust, and I am not at present in the humour to baulk my inclinations. Is there no middle way? Let me consider—There is, there is: my good genius has presented me with one: apt, obvious, honourable; the girl shall not go without her baubles: I'll not go without the girl; Miss Rusport shan't lose her diamonds; I'll save Dudley from destruction, and every party shall be a gainer by the project.

Enter Mrs. FULMER, L.H. introducing Miss DUDLEY.

Mrs. Ful. Miss Dudley, this is the worthy gentleman you wish to see; this is Mr. Belcour.

Lou. As I live, the very man that beset me in the streets! (*Aside.*)

Bel. An angel, by this light! Oh, I am gone, past all retrieving! (*Aside.*)

Lou. Mrs. Fulmer, sir, informs me, you are the gentleman from whom my father has received such civilities.

Bel. Her father! (*Aside.*) Oh, never name them.

Lou. Pardon me, Mr. Belcour, they must be both named and remembered; and if my father was here—

Bel. Her father again! (*Aside.*) I am much better pleased with his representative.

Lou. That title is my brother's, sir; I have no claim to it.

Bel. I believe it.

Lou. But as neither he nor my father were fortunate enough to be at home, I could not resist the opportunity—

Bel. Nor I neither, upon my soul, madam: let us improve it, therefore. I am in love with you to distraction; I was charmed at the first glance; I attempted to accost you; you fled; I followed; but was defeated of an interview; at length I have obtained one, and seize the opportunity of casting my person and my fortune at your feet.

Lou. You astonish me! Are you in your senses, or do you make a jest of my misfortunes? Do you ground pretences on your generosity, or do you make a practice of this folly with every woman you meet?

Bel. Upon my life, no: as you are the handsomest woman I ever met, so you are the first to whom I ever made the like professions: as for my generosity, madam, I must refer you on that score to this good lady, who I believe has something to offer in my behalf.

Lou. Don't build upon that, sir; I must have better proofs of your generosity, than the mere divestment of a little superfluous dross, before I can credit the sincerity of professions so abruptly delivered.

[*Exit hastily, L.H.*]

Bel. Oh! ye gods and goddesses, how her anger animates her beauty! (*Going out.*)

Mrs. Ful. Stay, sir; if you stir a step after her, I renounce your interest for ever; why, you'll ruin every thing.

Bel. Well, I must have her, cost what it will: I see she understands her own value though; a little superfluous dross, truly! She must have better proofs of my generosity.

Mrs. Ful. 'Tis exactly as I told you; your money she calls dross; she's too proud to stain her fingers with your coin; bait your hook well with jewels; try that experiment, and she's your own.

Bel. Take them; let them go; lay them at her feet; I must get out of the scrape as I can; my propensity is irresistible: there; you have them; they are yours: they are her's; but remember, they are a trust; I commit them to her keeping, till I can buy them off, with something she shall think more valuable; (*Mrs. Ful. crosses to exit*) now tell me when shall I meet her?

Mrs. Ful. How can I tell that? Don't you see what an alarm you have put her into? Oh! you're a rare one; but go your ways for this while: leave her to my management, and come to me at seven this evening; but remember not to bring empty pockets with you—Ha! ha! ha!

[*Exeunt Belcour, R.H. Mrs. Fulmer, L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Lady Rusport's House.*

Enter Miss RUSPORT, followed by a Servant, R.H.

Miss R. Desire Mr. Stockwell to walk in.

[*Exit Servant, L.H.D.*]

Enter STOCKWELL, L.H.D.

Stock. Madam, your most obedient servant: I am

honoured with your commands, by captain Dudley ; and have brought the money with me, as you directed ; I understand the sum you have occasion for is two hundred pounds.

Miss R. It is, sir ; I am quite confounded at your taking this trouble upon yourself, Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. There is a bank note, madam, to the amount ; your jewels are in safe hands, and will be delivered to you directly. If I had been happy in being better known to you, I should have hoped you would not have thought it necessary to place a deposit in my hands for so trifling a sum as you have now required me to supply you with.

Miss R. The baubles I sent you may very well be spared ; and, as they are the only security, in my present situation, I can give you, I could wish you would retain them in your hands : when I am of age, (which if I live a few months I shall be) I will replace your favour, with thanks.

Stock. It is obvious, miss Rusport, that your charms will suffer no impeachment by the absence of those superficial ornaments ; but they should be seen in the suit of a woman of fashion, not as creditors to whom you are indebted for your appearance, but as subservient attendants, which help to make up your equipage.

Miss R. Mr. Stockwell is determined not to wrong the confidence I reposed in his politeness.

Stock. I have only to request, madam, that you will allow Mr. Belcour, a young gentleman, in whose happiness I particularly interest myself, to have the honour of delivering you the box of jewels.

Miss R. Most gladly ; any friend of yours cannot fail of being welcome here.

Stock. I flatter myself you will not find him totally undeserving your good opinion ; an education not of the strictest kind, and strong animal spirits, are apt sometimes to betray him into youthful irregularities ; but a high principle of honour, and an uncommon benevolence, in the eye of candour, will, I hope, atone

for any faults, by which these good qualities are not impaired.

Miss R. I dare say Mr. Belcour's behaviour wants no apology: we have no right to be over strict in canvassing the morals of a common acquaintance.

Stock. I wish it may be my happiness to see Mr. Belcour in the list, not of your common, but particular acquaintance—of your friends, miss Rusport—I dare not be more explicit.

Miss R. Nor need you, Mr. Stockwell: I shall be studious to deserve his friendship; and though I have long since unalterably placed my affections on another, I trust, I have not left myself insensible to the merits of Mr. Belcour; and hope, that neither you nor he will, for that reason, think me less worthy your good opinion and regards.

Stock. Miss Rusport, I sincerely wish you happy: I have no doubt you have placed your affection on a deserving man; and I have no right to combat your choice.

[*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Miss R. How honourable is that behaviour! Now, if Charles was here, I should be happy. The old lady is so fond of her new Irish acquaintance, that I have the whole house at my disposal.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Enter BELCOUR, L.H.D. preceded by a Servant.

Serv. I ask your honour's pardon; I thought my young lady was here; who shall I inform her would speak to her?

Bel. Belcour is my name, sir; and pray beg your lady to put herself in no hurry on my account; for I'd sooner see the devil, than see her face. (*Aside.*) [*Exit Servant, R.H.*] In the name of all that's mischievous, why did Stockwell drive me hither in such haste? A pretty figure, truly, I shall make! an ambassador, without credentials! Blockhead that I was, to charge myself with her diamonds; officious, meddling puppy! Now they are irretrievably gone: that suspicious jade, Fulmer, wouldn't part even with a sight of them, though

I would have ransomed them at twice their value. Now must I trust to my poor wits, to bring me off: a lamentable dependence. Fortune, be my helper: here comes the girl—If she is noble minded, as she is said to be, she will forgive me: if not, 'tis a lost cause; for I have not thought of one word in my excuse.

Enter MISS RUSPORT, R.H.

Miss R. Mr. Belcour, I'm proud to see you: your friend, Mr. Stockwell, prepared me to expect this honour; and I am happy in the opportunity of being known to you.

Bel. A fine girl, by my soul! Now what a cursed hang dog do I look like! (*Aside.*)

Miss R. You are newly arrived in this country, sir?

Bel. Just landed, madam; just set a shore, with a large cargo of Muscavado sugars, rum puncheons, mahogany slabs, wet sweetmeats, and green paroquets.

Miss R. May I ask you how you like London, sir?

Bel. To admiration: I think the town and the town's folk are exactly suited; 'tis a great, rich, overgrown, noisy, tumultuous place: the whole morning is a bustle to get money, and the whole afternoon is a hurry to spend it.

Miss R. Are these all the observations you have made?

Bel. No, madam; I have observed the women are very captivating, and the men very soon caught.

Miss R. Ay, indeed! Whence do you draw that conclusion?

Bel. From infallible guides; the first remark I collect from what I now see, the second from what I now feel.

Miss R. Oh, the deuce take you! But to wave this subject, I believe, sir, this was a visit of business, not compliment; was it not?

Bel. Ay; now comes on my execution. (*Aside.*)

Miss R. You have some foolish trinkets of mine, Mr. Belcour; hav'nt you?

Bel. No, in truth; they are gone in search of a trinket, still more foolish than themselves. (*Aside.*)

Miss R. Some diamonds I mean, sir; Mr. Stockwell informed me you was charged with them.

Bel. Oh, yes, madam; but I have the most treacherous memory in life—Here they are! Pray put them up; they're all right; you need not examine them.

(*Gives a box.*)

Miss R. Hey day! right, sir! Why these are not my diamonds; these are quite different; and, as it should seem, of much greater value.

Bel. Upon my life I'm glad on't; for then I hope you value them more than your own.

Miss R. As a purchaser I should, but not as an owner; you mistake; these belong to some body else.

Bel. 'Tis yours, I'm afraid, that belong to somebody else. (*Aside.*)

Miss R. What is it you mean? I must insist upon your taking them back again.

Bel. Pray, madam, don't do that; I shall infallibly lose them; I have the worst luck with diamonds of any man living.

Miss R. That you might well say, were you to give me these in the place of mine; but, pray, sir, what is the reason of all this? Why have you changed the jewels? And where have you disposed of mine?

Bel. Miss Rusport, I cannot invent a lie for my life; and, if it was to save it, I couldn't tell one: I am an idle, dissipated, unthinking fellow, not worth your notice: in short, I am a West Indian! and you must try me according to the charter of my colony, not by a jury of English spinsters: the truth is, I have given away your jewels; caught with a pair of sparkling eyes, whose lustre blinded theirs, I served your property as I should my own, and lavished it away; let me not totally despair of your forgiveness; I frequently do wrong, but never with impunity; if your displeasure is added to my own, my punishment will be too severe. When I parted from the jewels, I had not the honour of knowing their owner.

Miss R. Mr. Belcour, your sincerity charms me ; I enter at once into your character, and I make all the allowances for it you can desire. I take your jewels for the present, because I know there is no other way of reconciling you to yourself ; but, if I give way to your spirit in one point, you must yield to mine in another ; remember, I will not keep more than the value of my own jewels : there is no need to be pilaged by more than one woman at a time, sir.

Bel. Now, may every blessing that can crown your virtues, and reward your beauty, be shower'd upon you ; may you meet admiration without envy, love without jealousy, and old age without infirmity ; may the man of your heart be ever constant, and you never meet a less penitent, or less grateful offender, than myself !

Enter Servant, L.H. and delivers a Letter.

Miss R. Does your letter require such haste?

(Crosses to him.)

Serv. I was bade to give it into your own hands, madam.

Miss R. From Charles Dudley, I see—have I your permission ? *(He retires.)* Good heaven, what do I read ! Mr. Belcour, you are concerned in this—

(Reads.)

Dear Charlotte—In the midst of our distress, Providence has cast a benefactor in our way, after the most unexpected manner : a young West Indian, rich, and with a warmth of heart peculiar to his climate, has rescued my father from his troubles, satisfied his wants, and enabled him to accomplish his exchange ; when I relate to you the manner in which this was done, you will be charmed : I can only now add, that it was by chance we found out that his name is Belcour, and that he is a friend of Mr. Stockwell's. I lose not a moment's time, in making you acquainted with this fortunate event, for reasons which delicacy obliges me to suppress ; but, perhaps, if you have not received the money on your jewels, you will not

think it necessary now to do it. I have the honour to be, dear madam, most faithfully yours,

CHARLES DUDLEY.

Is this your doing, sir? Never was generosity so worthily exerted.

Bel. Or, so greatly overpaid.

Miss R. After what you have now done for this noble, but indigent family, let me not scruple to unfold the whole situation of my heart to you. Know then, sir, and don't think the worse of me for the frankness of my declaration, that such is my attachment to the son of that worthy officer, whom you relieved, that the moment I am of age, and in possession of my fortune, I should hold myself the happiest of women to share it with young Dudley.

Bel. Say you so, madam! then let me perish if I don't love and reverence you above all womankind; and, if such is your generous resolution, never wait till you are of age; life is too short, pleasure too fugitive; the soul grows narrower every hour. I'll equip you for your escape—I'll convey you to the man of your heart, and away with you then to the first hospitable person that will take you in.

Miss R. O! blessed be the torrid zone for ever, whose rapid vegetation quickens nature into such benignity! But had I spirit to accept your offer, which is not improbable, wouldn't it be a mortifying thing, for a fond girl to find herself mistaken, and sent back to her home, like a vagrant?—and such, for what I know, might be my case.

Bel. Then he ought to be proscribed the society of mankind for ever—Ay, ay, 'tis the sham sister, that makes him thus indifferent! 'twill be a meritorious office, to take that girl out of the way. (*Aside.*)

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. Miss Dudley, to wait on you, madam.

Bel. Who?

Serv. Miss Dudley.

Miss R. What's the matter Mr. Belcour? Are you

frightened at the name of a pretty girl?—'Tis the sister of him we were speaking of—Pray admit her.

[*Exit Servant, L.H.D.*]

Bel. The sister!—So, so; he has imposed on her, too—this is an extraordinary visit, truly. Upon my soul, the assurance of some folks is not to be accounted for. (*Aside, bows and is going.*)

Miss R. I insist upon your not running away;—you'll be charmed with Louisa Dudley.

Bel. O yes, I am charmed with her.

Miss R. You have seen her then, have you?

Bel. Yes, yes, I've seen her.

Miss R. Well, isn't she a delightful girl?

Bel. Very delightful.

Miss R. Why, you answer as if you were in a court of justice. O' my conscience, I believe you are caught; I've a notion she has tricked you out of your heart.

Bel. I believe she has, and you out of your jewels; for, to tell you the truth, she's the very person I gave them to.

Miss R. You gave her my jewels! Louisa Dudley, my jewels! admirable! inimitable! Oh, the sly little jade!—but, hush! here she comes; I don't know how I shall keep my countenance.

Enter LOUISA, L.H.D.

My dear, I'm rejoiced to see you; how do you do?—I beg leave to introduce Mr. Belcour, a very worthy friend of mine. I believe Louisa, you have seen him before.

Lou. I have met the gentleman.

Miss R. You have met the gentleman!—well, sir, and you have met the lady; in short, you have met each other; why, then, don't you speak to each other? How you both stand! tongue-tied and fixed as statues—Ha! ha! ha! Why, you'll fall asleep by-and-by.

Lou. Fie upon you, fie upon you! is this fair?

Bel. Upon my soul, I never looked so like a fool in my life—the assurance of that girl puts me quite down.

Miss R. Sir—*Mr. Belcour*—Was it your pleasure to advance any thing? Not a syllable. Come, *Louisa*, woman's wit, they say, is never at a loss—Nor you neither?—Speechless both—Why, you were merry enough before this lady came in.

Lou. I am sorry I have been any interruption to your happiness, sir.

Bel. Madam!

Miss R. Madam! Is that all you can say? But come, my dear girl, I won't tease you—apropos! I must show you what a present this dumb gentleman has made me—Are not these handsome diamonds?

Lou. Yes, indeed, they seem very fine; but I am no judge of these things.

Miss R. Oh, you wicked little hypocrite; you are no judge of these things, *Louisa*; you have no diamonds, not you.

Lou. You know I haven't, miss *Rasport*: you know those things are infinitely above my reach.

Miss R. Ha! ha! ha!

Bel. She does tell a lie with an admirable countenance, that's true enough. (*Aside.*)

Lou. What ails you, *Charlotte*?—what impertinence have I been guilty of, that you should find it necessary to humble me at such a rate?—If you are happy, long may you be so: but, surely, it can be no addition to it to make me miserable.

Miss R. So serious—there must be some mystery in this—*Mr. Belcour*, will you leave us together! You see I treat you with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance already.

Bel. Oh, by all means; pray command me. (*Crosses to L.H.*) *Miss Rasport*, I am your most obedient! By your condescension in accepting these poor trifles, I am under eternal obligations to you.—To you, miss *Dudley*, I shall not offer a word on that subject:—you despise finery! you have a soul above it; I adore your spirit; I was rather unprepared for meeting you here, but I shall hope for an opportunity of making myself better known to you.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Miss R. Louisa Dudley, you surprise me ; I never saw you act thus before : can't you bear a little innocent raillery before the man of your heart ?

Lou. The man of my heart, madam ! Be assured I never was so visionary as to aspire to any man whom miss Rusport honours with her choice.

Mrs. R. My choice, my dear ! Why, we are playing at cross-purposes : how entered it into your head that Mr. Belcour was the man of my choice ?

Lou. Why, didn't he present you with these diamonds ?

Miss R. Well : perhaps, he did—and pray, Louisa, have you no diamonds ?

Lou. I diamond's truly ! Who should give me diamonds ?

Miss R. Who but this very gentleman : apropos : here comes your brother—

Enter CHARLES, L.H.D.

I insist upon referring our dispute to him : your sister and I, Charles, have a quarrel ; Belcour, the hero of your letter, has just left us—somehow or other, Louisa's bright eyes have caught him ; and the poor fellow's fallen desperately in love with her—(don't interrupt me hus-y)—Well, that's excusable enough, you'll say : but the jest of the story is, that this hair-brain'd spark, who does nothing like other people, has given her the very identical jewels which you pledged for me to Mr. Stockwell ; and will you believe that this little demure slut made up a face, and squeezed out three or four hypocritical tears, because I rallied her about it !

Charles. I'm all astonishment ! Louisa, tell me, without reserve, has Mr. Belcour given you any diamonds ?

Lou. None, upon my honour.

Charles. Has he made any professions to you ?

Lou. He has ; but altogether in a style so whimsical and capricious, that the best which can be said of them

is to tell you, that they seemed more the result of good spirits than good manners.

Miss R. Ay, ay, now the murder's out: he's in love with her, and she has no very great dislike to him; trust to my observations, Charles, for that: as to the diamonds, there's some mistake about them, and you must clear it up: three minutes' conversation with him will put every thing in a right train: go, go, Charles, 'tis a brother's business; about it instantly; ten to one you'll find him over the way, at Mr. Stockwell's.

Charles. I confess I'm impatient to have the case cleared up; I'll take your advice, and find him out: good bye to you.

Miss R. Your servant: my life upon it, you'll find Belcour a man of honour. Come, Louisa, let us adjourn to my dressing-room; I've a little private business to transact with you, before the old lady comes up to tea, and interrupts us.

[*Exeunt, Charles, L.H. Miss R. and Louisa, R.H.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A room in Fulmer's House.*

Enter FULMER and MRS. FULMER, L.H.

Ful. Patty, wasn't Mr. Belcour with you?

Mrs. Ful. He was; and is now shut up in my chamber, in high expectation of an interview with miss Dudley: she's at present with her brother, and 'twas with some difficulty I persuaded my hot-headed spark to wait till he has left her.

Ful. Well, child, and what then?

Mrs. Ful. Why, then, Mr. Fulmer, I think it will be time for you and me to steal a march, and be gone.

Ful. So this is all the fruit of your ingenious project; a shameful overthrow, or a sudden flight.

Mrs. Ful. Why, my project was a mere impromptu, and can, at worst, but quicken our departure a few days; you know we had fairly outlived our credit here, and a trip to Boulogne is no ways unseasonable. Nay, never droop, man—Hark! hark! here's enough to bear charges. (*Showing a purse.*)

Ful. Let me see, let me see: this weighs well; this is of the right sort: why, your West Indian bled freely.

Mrs. Ful. But that's not all: look here! Here are the sparklers! (*Showing the jewels.*) Now what d'ye think of my performances? Heh! a foolish scheme, isn't it—a silly woman—

Ful. Thou art a Judith, a Joan of Arc, and I'll march under thy banners, girl, to the world's end: come, let's be gone; I've little to regret; my creditors may share the old books amongst them; they'll have occasion for philosophy to support their loss; they'll find enough upon my shelves; the world is my library; I read mankind—Now, Patty, lead the way.

Mrs. Ful. Adieu, Belcour. [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY and LOUISA, L.H.

Charles. Well, Louisa, I confess the force of what you say: I accept miss Rusport's bounty; and when you see my generous Charlotte, tell her—but have a care, there is a selfishness even in gratitude, when it is too profuse; to be overthankful for any one favour, is, in effect to lay out for another; the best return I could make my benefactress would be, never to see her more.

Lou. I understand you.

Charles. We, that are poor, Louisa, should be cautious; for this reason, I would guard you against Belcour; at least, till I can unravel the mystery of miss Rusport's diamonds; I was disappointed of finding him at Mr. Stockwell's, and am now going in search of him again: he may intend honourably; but, I confess to you, I am staggered; think no more of him, therefore,

for the present : of this be sure, while I have life and you have honour, I will protect you, or perish in your defence. *[Exit, R.H.]*

Lou. Think of him no more ! Well, I'll obey ; but if a wandering, uninvited thought should creep by chance into my bosom, must I not give the harmless wretch a shelter ? Fie, fie, upon it ! Belcour pursues, insults me ; yet, such is the fatality of my condition, that what should rouse resentment, only calls up love.

Enter BELCOUR, R.H.

Bel. Alone, by all that's happy !

Lou. Ah !

Bel. Oh ! shriek not, start not, stir not loveliest creature ! but let me kneel and gaze upon your beauties.

Lou. Sir ! Mr. Belcour, rise ! What is it you do ? Should he that parted from me but this minute, now return I tremble for the consequence.

Bel. Fear nothing ; let him come : I love you, madam ; he'll find it hard to make me unsay that.

Lou. You terrify me ; your impetuous temper frightens me ; you know my situation ! it is not generous to pursue me thus.

Bel. True, I do know your situation, your real one, miss Dudley, and am resolved to snatch you from it ; 'twill be a meritorious act. Come, thou art a dear enchanting girl, and I'm determin'd not to live a minute longer without thee.

Lou. Hold ! are you mad ? I see you are a bold assuming man ; and know not where to stop.

Bel. Who that beholds such beauty can ? Provoking girl ! is it within the stretch of my fortune to content you ? What is it you can further ask, that I am not ready to grant !

Lou. Yes, with the same facility, that you bestowed upon me miss Rusport's diamonds. For shame ! for shame ! was that a manly story ? *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Bel. So ! so ! these devilish diamonds meet me every where. Let me perish if I meant you any harm :

Oh! I could tear my tongue out for saying a word about the matter.

Lou. Go to her then, and contradict it; 'till that is done, my reputation is at stake.

Bel. Her reputation!—Now she has got upon that, she'll go on for ever. (*Aside.*)—What is there I will not do for your sake! I will go to miss Rusport.

Lou. Do so; restore her own jewels to her, which I suppose you kept back for the purpose of presenting others to her of a greater value? but, for the future, Mr. Belcour, when you would do a gallant action to that lady, don't let it be at my expense.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Bel. I see where she points: she is willing enough so give up miss Rusport's diamonds, now she finds she shall be a gainer by the exchange. Be it so! 'tis what I wished.—Well, madam, I will return to miss Rusport her own jewels, and you shall have others of tenfold their value.

Lou. No, sir, you err most widely; it is my good opinion, not my vanity, which you must bribe.

Bel. Why what the devil would she have now?—miss Dudley, it is my wish to obey and please you! but I have some apprehension that we mistake each other.

Lou. I think we do: tell me, then, in a few words, what is it you aim at.

Bel. In a few words, then, and in plain honesty, I must tell you, so entirely am I captivated with you, that had you but been such as it would have become me to have called my wife, I had been happy in knowing you by that name; as it is, you are welcome to partake my fortune, give me in return your person, give me pleasure, give me love; free, disencumbered, antimatrimonial love.

Lou. Stand off, and never let me see you more.

Bel. Hold, hold, thou dear, tormenting, tantalizing girl! Upon my knees, I swear you shall not stir till you have consented to my bliss. (*Kneels.*)

Lou. Unhand me, sir; O, Charles, protect me, rescue me, redress me. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY, R.H.U.E.

Charles. How's this !—Rise, villain, and defend yourself.

Bel. Villain ! (*Rises.*)

Charles. The man who wrongs that lady is a villain—Draw !

Bel. Never fear me, young gentleman ; brand me for a coward if I baulk you.

Charles. Yet hold ! let me not be too hasty : your name, I think, is Belcour.

Bel. Well, sir.

Charles. How is it, Mr. Belcour, you have done this mean, unmanly wrong, beneath the mask of generosity, to give this fatal stab to our domestic peace ? You might, have had my thanks, my blessing : take my defiance now. 'Tis Dudley speaks to you ! the brother, the protector, of that injured lady.

Bel. The brother ! give yourself a truer title.

Charles. What is't you mean ?

Bel. Come, come, I know both her and you : I found you, sir, (but how or why I know not) in the good graces of miss Rusport—(yes, colour at that name.) I gave you no disturbance there, never broke in upon you in that rich and plenteous quarter, but, when I could have blasted all your projects with a word, spared you, in foolish pity spared you, nor roused her from the fond credulity in which your artifice had lulled her.

Charles. No, sir, nor boasted to her of the splendid present you had made my poor Louisa ; the diamonds, Mr. Belcour : how was that ? What can you plead to that arraignment ?

Bel. You question me too late ; the name of Belcour and of villain never met before ; had you inquired of me before you uttered that rash word, you might have saved yourself or me a mortal error ; now, sir, I neither give nor take an explanation : so come on !

(*They fight.*)

Enter LOUISA and O'FLAHERTY, R.H.

Lou. Hold, hold, for heaven's sake !

O'Fla. Hell and confusion ! What's all this uproar for ? Can't you leave off cutting one another's throats, and mind what the poor girl says to you ? You've done a notable thing, hav'nt you both, to put her into such a flurry ? I think, o'my conscience, she's the most frightened of the three.

Charles. Dear Louisa, recollect yourself ; why did you interfere ? 'tis in your cause.

Bel. Now could I kill him for catessing her.

O'Fla. O sir, your most obedient ! You are the gentleman I had the honour of meeting here before ; you was then running off at full speed, like a Calmuck, now you are tilting and driving like a bedlamite, with this lad here, that seems as mad as yourself : 'tis a pity but your country had a little more employment for you both.

Bel. (*Crosses to R.H.*) Mr. Dudley, when you have recovered the lady, you know where I am to be found.

[*Exit, R.H.*

O'Fla. Well, then, can't you stay where you are, and that will save the trouble of looking after you ? Yon volatile fellow thinks to give a man the meeting by getting out of his way : by my soul, 'tis a roundabout method that of his. But I think he called you Dudley : hark'ye, young man, are you the son of my friend, the old captain ?

Charles. I am. Help me to convey this lady to her chamber, and I shall be more at leisure to answer your questions.

O'Fla. Ay, will I : come along, pretty one ; if you've had wrong done you, young man, you need look no further for a second ; Dennis O'Flaherty's your man for that : but never draw your sword before a woman, Dudley ; damn it, never, while you live, draw your sword before a woman.

[*Exeunt, L.H.D.*

SCENE II.—*Lady Rusport's house.*

Enter LADY RUSPORT, R.H. *and* *Servant*, L.H.

Serv. An elderly gentleman, who says his name is Varland, desires leave to wait on your ladyship.

[*Crosses and Exit*, L.H.D.]

Lady R. Show him in : the very man I wish to see. Varland ! he was sir Oliver's solicitor, and privy to all his affairs ; he brings some good tidings ; some fresh mortgage, or another bond come to light ; they start up every day.

Enter VARLAND, L.H.D.

Mr. Varland ! I'm glad to see you ; you are heartily welcome, house and Mr. Varland ; you and I hav'n't met since our late irreparable loss : how you passed your time this

Var. Too ill enough : I thought I must have followed good sir Oliver.

Lady R. Alack-a-day, poor man ! Well, Mr. Varland, you find me here overwhelmed with trouble and fatigue ; torn to pieces with a multiplicity of affairs, a great fortune poured upon me, unsought for and unexpected : 'twas my good father's will and pleasure it should be so, and I must submit.

Var. Your ladyship inherits under a will, made in the year forty-five, immediately after captain Dudley's marriage with your sister.

Lady R. I do so, Mr. Varland ; I do so.

Var. I well remember it ; I engrossed every syllable ; but I am surprised to find your ladyship set so little store by this vast accession.

Lady R. Why, you know, Mr. Varland, I am a moderate woman ; I had enough before ; a small matter satisfies me ; and sir Stephen Rusport (heaven be his portion !) took care I shouldn't want that.

Var. Very true, very true; he did so; and I am overjoyed to find your ladyship in this disposition; for truth to say, I was not without apprehension the news I have to communicate would have been of some prejudice to your ladyship's tranquility.

Lady R. News, sir! what news have you for me?

Var. Nay, nothing to alarm you; a trifle in your present way of thinking: I have a will of sir Oliver's, you have never seen.

Lady R. A will! impossible! how came you by it?

Var. I drew it up, at his command, in his last illness: it will save you a world of trouble: it gives his whole estate from you to his grandson, Charles Dudley.

Lady R. To Dudley! his estate to Charles Dudley! I can't support it! I shall faint! You have killed me, you vile man! I never shall survive it!

Var. Look ye there, now: I protest, I thought you would have rejoiced at being clear of the incumbrance.

Lady R. 'Tis false: 'tis all a forgery, concerted between you and Dudley; why else did I never hear of it before?

Var. Have patience, my lady, and I'll tell you. By sir Oliver's direction, I was to deliver this will into no hands but his grandson Dudley's: the young gentleman happened to be then in Scotland: I was dispatched thither in search of him: the hurry and fatigue of my journey brought on a fever by the way, which confined me in extreme danger for several days; upon my recovery, I pursued my journey, found young Dudley had left Scotland in the interim, and am now directed hither: where as soon as I can find him, doubtless, I shall discharge my conscience, and fulfil my commission.

Lady R. Dudley, then, as yet knows nothing of this will?

Var. Nothing: that secret rests with me.

Lady R. A thought occurs: by this fellow's talking of his conscience, I should guess it was upon sale. (*Aside.*)—Come, Mr. Varland, if 'tis as you say, I must

submit. I was somewhat flurried at first, and forgot myself: I ask your pardon: this is no place to talk of business; step with me into my room; we will there compare the will, and resolve accordingly.—Oh! would your fever had you, and I had your paper! (*Aside.*)

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

Enter MISS RUSPORT, CHARLES & O'FLAHERTY, L.H.

Miss R. So, so! My lady and her lawyer have retired to close confabulation: now, major, if you are the generous man I take you for, grant me one favour.

O'Fla. 'Faith will I, and not think much of my generosity neither; for, though it may not be in my power to do the favour you ask, look you, it can never be in my heart to refuse it.

Charles. Could this man's tongue do justice to his thoughts, how eloquent would he be! (*Aside.*)

Miss R. Plant yourself, then, in that room; keep guard for a few moments upon the enemy's motions in the chamber beyond; and if they should attempt a sally, stop their march a moment, till your friend here can make good his retreat down the back stairs.

O'Fla. A word to the wise! I'm an old campaigner: make the best use of your time; and trust me for tying the old cat up to the picket.

Miss R. Hush! hush! not so loud.

Charles. 'Tis the office of a sentinel, major, you have undertaken, rather than that of a field-officer.

O'Fla. 'Tis the office of a friend, my dear boy; and therefore no disgrace to a general. [*Exit R.H.D.*]

Miss R. Well, Charles, will you commit yourself to me for a few minutes?

Charles. Most readily; and let me, before one goes by, tender you the only payment I can ever make for your abundant generosity.

Miss R. Hold, hold! so vile a thing as money must not come between us. What shall I say? O Charles! O, Dudley! What difficulties have you thrown upon me! Familiarly as we have lived, I shrink not at what

I am doing ; and anxiously as I have sought this opportunity, my fears almost persuade me to abandon it.

Charles. You alarm me !

Miss R. Your looks and actions have been so distant, and at this moment are so deterring, that, was it not for the hope that delicacy, and not disgust, inspires this conduct in you, I should sink with shame and apprehension ; but time presses ; and I must speak, and plainly too.—Was you now in possession of your grandfather's estate, as justly you ought to be, and was you inclined to seek a companion for life, should you, or should you not, in that case, honour your unworthy Charlotte with your choice ?

Charles. My unworthy Charlotte ! So judge me, heaven, there is not a circumstance on earth so valuable as your happiness, so dear to me as your person ; but to bring poverty, disgrace, reproach from friends, ridicule from all the world, upon a generous benefactress ; thievishly to steal into an open and unreserved ingenuous heart, O Charlotte ! dear unhappy girl, it is not to be done.

Miss R. Come, my dear Charles, I have enough ; make that enough still more by sharing it with me : sole heiress of my father's fortune, a short time will put it in my disposal ; in the mean while you will be sent to join your regiment ; let us prevent a separation, by setting out this very night for that happy country, where marriage still is free ; carry me this moment to Belcour's lodgings.

Charles. Belcour's ?—The name is ominous ; there's murder in it : inexorable honour ! (*Aside.*)

Miss R. D'ye pause ? Put me into his hands, while you provide the means for our escape : he is the most generous, the most honourable of men.

Charles. Honourable ! most honourable !

Miss R. Can you doubt it ? Do you demur ? Have you forgot your letter ? Why, Belcour, 'twas that prompted me to this proposal, that promised to supply the means, that nobly offered his unasked assistance—

Enter O'FLAHERTY, hastily, R.H.

O'Fla. Run, run; for holy St. Anthony's sake, to horse and away! The conference is broke up, and the enemy advances upon a full Piedmontese trot, within pistol-shot of your encampment.

Miss R. Here, here, down the back stairs! O, Charles, remember me!

Charles. Farewell! Now, now, I feel myself a coward. *[Exit, L.H.]*

Miss R. What does he mean? *[Exit, L.H.]*

O'Fla. Ask no questions, but be gone: she has cooled the lad's courage, and wonders he feels like a coward. There's a damned deal of mischief brewing between this hyena and her lawyer: Here comes old six and eight-pence—'egad I'll step behind this screen and listen: a good soldier must sometimes fight in ambush, as well as in open field. *(Retires.)*

Enter VARLAND, R.H.S.E

Var. Let me consider—Five thousand pounds, prompt payment, for destroying this scrap of paper, not worth five farthings; 'tis a fortune easily earned; yes, and 'tis another man's fortune easily thrown away; 'tis a good round sum, to be paid down at once for a bribe: but 'tis a damned rogue's trick in me to take it.

O'Fla. So, so! this fellow speaks truth to himself, though he lies to other people. *(Aside.)*

Var. 'Tis breaking the trust of my benefactor, that's a foul crime; but he's dead, and can never reproach me with it: and 'tis robbing young Dudley of his lawful patrimony, that's a hard case; but he's alive, and knows nothing of the matter.

O'Fla. These lawyers are so used to bring off the rogueries of others, that they are never without an excuse for their own. *(Aside.)*

Var. Were I assured now that Dudley would give me half the money for producing this will, that lady

Rusport does for concealing it, I would deal with him, and be an honest man at half price; and I wish every gentleman of my profession could lay his hand on his heart, and say the same thing.

O'Fla. A bargain, old gentleman! Nay, never start nor stare; you wasn't afraid of your own conscience, never be afraid of me.

Var. Of you, sir! who are you pray?

O'Fla. I'll tell you who I am: you seem to wish to be honest, but want the heart to set about it; now I am the very man in the world to make you so; for if you do not give up that paper this very instant, by the soul of me, fellow, I will not leave one whole bone in your skin that sha'n't be broken.

Var. What right have you, pray, to take this paper from me?

O'Fla. What right have you, pray, to keep it from young Dudley? I don't know what it contains, but I am apt to think it will be safer in my hands than in yours; therefore give it me without more words, and save yourself a beating: do now; you had best.

Var. Well, sir, I may as well make a grace of necessity. There; I have acquitted my conscience, at the expense of five thousand pounds.

O'Fla. Five thousand pounds! Mercy upon me! When there are such temptations in the law, can we wonder if some of the corps are a disgrace to it?

Var. Well, you have got the paper; if you are an honest man, give it to Charles Dudley.

O'Fla. An honest man! look at me, friend, I am a soldier, this is not the livery of a knave; I am an Irishman, honey; mine is not the country of dishonour. Now, sirrah, be gone; if you enter these doors, or give lady Rusport the least item of what has passed, I will cut off both your ears, and rob the pillory of its due.

Var. I wish I was once fairly out of his sight.

[*Exeunt, O'Fla. R.H. Var. L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*A Room in Stockwell's House.*

Enter STOCKWELL, R.H.

Stock. I must disclose myself to Belcour; this noble instance of his generosity, which old Dudley has been relating, allies me to him at once; concealment becomes too painful; I shall be proud to own him for my son—But see, he's here.

Enter BELCOUR, L.H.D. who throws himself upon a Sofa.

Bel. O my curs'd tropical constitution! 'Would to heaven I had been dropped upon the snows of Lapland, and never felt the blessed influence of the sun, so had I never burnt with these inflammatory passions!

Stock. So, so, you seem disordered, Mr. Belcour.

Bel. Disordered, sir! Why did I ever quit the soil in which I grew; what evil planet drew me from that warm, sunny region, where naked nature walks without disguise, into this cold, contriving, artificial country.

Stock. Come, sir, you've met a rascal, what o'that? general conclusions are illiberal.

Bel. No, sir, I have met reflection by the way; I have come from folly, noise, and fury, and met a silent monitor—Well, well, a villain! 'twas not to be pardoned—pray never mind me, sir.

Stock. Alas! my heart bleeds for him. (*Aside.*)

Bel. And yet, I might have heard him: now, plague upon that blundering Irishman, for coming in as he did; the hurry of the deed might palliate the event; deliberate execution has less to plead—Mr. Stockwell, I am bad company to you,

Stock. Oh, sir, make no excuse. I think you have not found me forward to pry into the secrets of your

pleasures and pursuits ; 'tis not my disposition ; but there are times, when want of curiosity would be want of friendship.

Bel. Ah, sir, mine is a case wherein you and I shall never think alike.

Stock. 'Tis very well, sir; if you think I can render you any service, it may be worth your trial to confide in me ; if not, your secret is safer in your own bosom.

Bel. That sentiment demands my confidence : pray sit down by me. You must know, I have an affair of honour on my hands with young Dudley ; and, though I put up with no man's insult, yet I wish to take away no man's life.

Stock. I know the young man, and am apprised of your generosity to his father ; what can have bred a quarrel between you ?

Bel. A foolish passion on my side, and a haughty provocation on his. There is a girl, Mr. Stockwell, whom I have unfortunately seen, of most uncommon beauty ; she has withal an air of so much natural modesty, that, had I not had good assurance of her being an attainable wanton, I declare I should as soon have thought of attempting the chastity of Diana.

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Stock. Hey day, why do you interrupt us ?

Serv. Sir, there's an Irish gentleman will take no denial : he says he must see Mr. Belcour directly, upon business of the last consequence.

Bel. Admit him : 'tis the Irish officer that parted us, and brings me young Dudley's challenge ; I should have made a long story of it, and he'll tell you in three words.

Enter O'FLAHERTY, L.H.D.

O'Fla. 'Save you, my dear ; and you, sir, I have a little bit of a word in private for you.

Bel. Pray deliver your commands : this gentleman is my intimate friend.

O'Fla. Why, then, ensign Dudley will be glad to measure swords with you yonder, at the London Tavern, in Bishopsgate-street, at nine o'clock—you know the place.

Bel. I do, and shall observe the appointment.

O'Fla. Will you be of the party, sir ? we shall want a fourth hand.

Stock. Savage as the custom is, I close with your proposal ; and though I am not fully informed of the occasion of your quarrel, I shall rely on Mr. Belcour's honour for the justice of it, and willingly stake my life in his defence.

O'Fla. Sir, you are a gentleman of honour, and I shall be glad of being better known to you.—But, hark ye, Belcour, I had like to have forgot part of my errand : there is the money you gave old Dudley : you may tell it over, 'faith : 'tis a receipt in full : now the lad can put you to death with a safe conscience, and when he has done that job for you, let it be a warning how you attempt the sister of a man of honour.

Bel. The sister !

O'Fla. Ay, the sister ; 'tis English, is it not ? Or Irish ; 'tis all one ; you understand me ; his sister, or Louisa Dudley, that's her name, I think, call her which you will. By St. Patrick, 'tis a foolish piece of business, Belcour, to go about to take away a poor girl's virtue from her, when there are so many to be met with in this town, who have disposed of their's to your hands.

[*Exit, L. H. D.*]

Stock. Why, I am thunderstruck ! what is it you have done, and what is the shocking business in which I have engaged ? If I understand him right, 'tis the sister of young Dudley you've been attempting : you talked to me of a professed wanton ; the girl he speaks of has beauty enough indeed to inflame your desires, but she has honour, innocence, and simplicity, to awe the most licentious passions ; if you have done that,

Mr. Belcour, I renounce you, I abandon you, I forswear all fellowship or friendship with you for ever.

Bel. Have patience for a moment: we do indeed speak of the same person, but she is not innocent, she is not young Dudley's sister.

Stock. Astonishing, who told you this?

Bel. The woman where she lodges, the person who put me on the pursuit, and contrived our meetings.

Stock. What woman? What person?

Bel. Fulmer her name is: I warrant you I did not proceed without good ground.

Stock. Fulmer, Fulmer? Who waits?

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Send Mr. Stukely hither directly; [*Exit Serv. L.H.D.*]
I begin to see my way into this dark transaction. Mr. Belcour, Mr. Belcour, you are no match for the cunning and contrivances of this intriguing town.

Enter STUKELY, L.H.D.

Pry'three, Stukely, what is the name of the woman and her husband, who were stopped upon suspicion of selling stolen diamonds at our next-door neighbour's, the jeweller?

Stuke. Fulmer.

Stock. So!

Bel. Can you procure me a sight of those diamonds?

Stuke. They are now in my hand; I was desired to show them to Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. Give them to me—What do I see?—as I live the very diamonds miss Rusport sent hither, and which I entrusted to you to return.

Bel. Yes, but I betrayed that trust, and gave them Mrs. Fulmer, to present to miss Dudley.

Stock. With a view, no doubt, to bribe her to compliance?

Bel. I own it.

Stock. For shame, for shame ;—and 'twas this woman's intelligence you relied upon for miss Dudley's character.

Bel. I thought she knew her ;—by heaven I would have died, sooner than have insulted a woman of virtue, or a man of honour.

Stock. I think you would ; but mark the danger of licentious courses ; you are betrayed, robbed, abused, and, but for this providential discovery, in a fair way of being sent out of the world, with all your follies on your head.—Dear Stukely, go to my neighbour, tell him, I have an owner for the jewels ; and beg him to carry the people under custody to the London Tavern, and wait for me there. [*Exit Stukely, L.H.D.*] I see it was a trap laid for you, which you have narrowly escaped : you addressed a woman of honour with all the loose incense of a profane admirer ; and you have drawn upon you the resentment of a man of honour, who thinks himself bound to protect her. Well, sir, you must atone for this mistake.

Bel. To the lady the most penitent submission I can make is justly due ; but in the execution of an act of justice, it never shall be said my soul was swayed by the least particle of fear. I have received a challenge from her brother ; now, though I would give my fortune, almost my life itself, to purchase her happiness, yet, I cannot abate her one scruple of my honour ;—I have been branded with the name of villain.

Stock. Ay, sir, you mistook her character, and he mistook your's, error begets error.

Bel. Villain, Mr. Stockwell, is a harsh word.

Stock. It is a harsh word, and should be unsaid.

Bel. Come, come, it shall be unsaid.

Stock. Or else, what follows ? Why, the sword is drawn ; and to heal the wrongs you have done to the reputation of the sister, you make an honourable amends by murdering the brother.

Bel. Murdering !

Stock. 'Tis thus religion writes and speaks the word ;

in the vocabulary of modern honour, there is no such term.—But, come, I don't despair of satisfying the one, without alarming the other ; that done, I have a discovery to unfold, that you will then, I hope, be fitted to receive.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.D.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.SCENE I.—*Stockwell's House.*

Enter CAPTAIN DUDLEY, LOUISA, and STUKELY, R.H.

Dud. And are those wretches, Fulmer and his wife, in safe custody ?

Stuke. They are in good hands ; I accompanied them to the tavern, where your son was to be, and then went in search of you. You may be sure, Mr. Stockwell will enforce the law against them as far as it will go.

Dud. What mischief might their cursed machinations have produced, but for this timely discovery !

Lou. Still I am terrified ; I tremble with apprehension.

Stuke. Mr. Stockwell is with them, madam, and you have nothing to fear ; you may expect them every minute ;—and see, madam, agreeably to your wish, they are here.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

Enter CHARLES : afterwards STOCKWELL, and O'FLAHERTY, L.H.D.

Lou. O Charles, O brother ! how could you serve me so ? how could you tell me you was going to lady Rusport's, and then set out on a design of fighting

Mr. Belcour? But where is he; where is your antagonist?

Stock. Captain, I am proud to see you; and you, miss Dudley, do me particular honour. We have been adjusting, sir, a very extraordinary and dangerous mistake, which, I take for granted, my friend Stukely has explained to you.

Dud. He has—I have too good an opinion of Mr. Belcour, to believe he could be guilty of a designed affront to an innocent girl; and I am much too well acquainted with your character, to suppose you could abet him in such design; I have no doubt, therefore, all things will be set to rights in a very few words, when we have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Belcour.

Stock. He has only stepped into the counting-house, and will wait upon you directly. You will not be over-strict, madam, in weighing Mr. Belcour's conduct to the minutest scruple;—his manners, passions, and opinions, are not as yet assimilated to this climate; he comes amongst you a new character, an inhabitant of a new world; and both hospitality, as well as pity, recommend him to our indulgence.

Enter BELCOUR; L.H.D. bows to Miss DUDLEY.

Bel. I am happy, and ashamed, to see you;—no man in his senses would offend you; I have forfeited mine, and erred against the light of the sun, when I overlooked your virtues; but your beauty was predominant, and hid them from my sight;—I now perceive, I was the dupe of a most improbable report, and humbly entreat your pardon.

Lou. Think no more of it; 'twas a mistake.

Bel. My life has been composed of little else; 'twas founded in mystery, and has continued in error:—I was once given to hope, Mr. Stockwell, that you was to have delivered me from these difficulties; but either I do not deserve your confidence, or I was deceived in my expectations.

Stock. When this lady has confirmed your pardon, I shall hold you deserving of my confidence.

Lou. That was granted the moment it was asked.

Bel. To prove my title to his confidence, honour me so far with yours, as to allow me a few minutes' conversation in private with you.

(*She turns to her father.*)

Dud. By all means, Louisa; (*They retire.*) come, Mr. Stockwell, let us go into another room.

Charles. And now major O'Flaherty, I claim your promise, of a sight of the paper, that is to unravel this conspiracy of my aunt Rusport's. I think I have waited with great patience.

O'Fla. I have been endeavouring to call to mind what it was I overheard; I have got the paper, and will give you the best account I can of the whole transaction.

[*Exeunt, all but Louisa and Belcour, R.H.*]

Bel. Miss Dudley, I have solicited this audience, to repeat to you my penitence and confusion. How shall I atone? What reparation can I make to you and virtue?

Lou. To me there's nothing due, nor any thing demanded of you but your more favourable opinion for the future, if you should chance to think of me. Upon the part of virtue, I am not empowered to speak; but if hereafter, as you range through life, you should surprise her in the person of some wretched female, poor as myself, and not so well protected, enforce not your advantage, complete not your licentious triumph; but raise her, rescue her from shame and sorrow, and reconcile her to herself again.

Bel. I will, I will; by bearing your idea ever present in my thoughts, virtue shall keep an advocate within me: but tell me, loveliest, when you pardon the offence, can you, all perfect as you are, approve of the offender? As I now cease to view you in that false light I lately did, can you, and in the fulness of your bounty will you, cease also to reflect upon the libertine addresses I have paid you, and look upon me as your reformed, your rational admirer?

Lou. Are sudden reformations apt to last? and how can I be sure the first fair face you meet will not ensnare affections so unsteady, and that I shall not lose you lightly as I gained you?

Bel. I know I am not worthy your regard; but there's a healing virtue in your eyes, that makes recovery certain; I cannot be a villain in your arms.

Lou. That you can never be: whomsoever you shall honour with your choice; my life upon't, that woman will be happy.

Bel. I see, miss Dudley, I've not yet obtained your pardon.

Lou. Nay, that you are in full possession of.

Bel. Oh, seal it with your hand, then, loveliest of women, confirm it with your heart: make me honourably happy, and crown your penitent, not with your pardon only, but your love.

Lou. My love!

Enter O'FLAHERTY; afterwards DUDLEY and CHARLES, with STOCKWELL, R.H.

O'Fla. Joy, joy! sing, dance, leap, laugh for joy. Ha' done making love, and fall down on your knees to every saint in the calendar, for they are all on your side, and honest St. Patrick at the head of them.

Charles. O Louisa, such an event! by the luckiest chance in life, we have discovered a will of my grandfather's, made in his last illness, by which he cuts off my aunt Rusport with a small annuity, and leaves me heir to his whole estate, with a fortune of fifteen thousand pounds to yourself.

Lou. What is it you tell me? O sir, instruct me how to support this unexpected turn of fortune.

(To her father.)

Dud. Name not fortune, 'tis the work of Providence; 'tis the justice of heaven that would not suffer innocence to be oppressed, nor your base aunt to prosper in her cruelty and cunning.

(A Servant whispers Belcour, and he goes out L.H.D.)

O'Fla. You shall pardon me, captain Dudley, but

you must not overlook St. Patrick neither ; for, by my soul, if he had not put it into my head to slip behind the screen, when your righteous aunt and the lawyer were plotting together, I don't see how you would ever have come at the paper there, that master Stockwell is reading.

Dud. True, my good friend, you are the father of this discovery ; but how did you contrive to get this will from the lawyer ?

O'Fla. By force my dear ; the only way of getting anything from the lawyer's clutches.

Stock. Well, major, when he brings his action of assault and battery against you, the least Dudley can do is to defend you with all the weapons you have put into his hands.

Charles. That I am bound to do ; and after the happiness I shall have in sheltering a father's age from the vicissitudes of life, my next delight will be in offering you an asylum in the bosom of your country.

O'Fla. And upon my soul, my dear, 'tis high time I was there, for 'tis now thirty long years since I sat foot in my native country, and by the power of St. Patrick I swear I think it's worth all the rest of the world put together.

Dud. Ay, major, much about that time have I been beating the round of service, and 'twere well for us both to give over ; we have stood many a tough gale, and abundance of hard blows, but Charles shall lay us up in a little private, but safe harbour, where we'll rest from our labour, and peacefully wind up the remainder of our days.

O'Fla. Agreed, and you may take it as a proof of my esteem young man, that major O'Flaherty accepts a favour at your hands ; for, by heaven, I'd sooner starve than say I thank you to the man I despise : but I believe you are an honest lad, and I'm glad you've trounced the old cat ; for on my conscience, I believe I must otherwise have married her myself, to have let you in for a share of her fortune.

Stock. Hey day, what's become of Belcour ?

Lou. One of your servants called him out just now, and seemingly on some earnest occasion.

Stock. I hope, miss Dudley, he has atoned to you as a gentleman ought.

Lou. Mr. Belcour, sir, will always do what a gentleman ought, and in my case I fear only you will think he has done too much.

Stock. What has he done? and what can be too much? Pray heaven, it may be as I wish! (*Aside.*)

Dud. Let us hear it, child.

Lou. With confusion for my own unworthiness, I confess to you he has offered me—

Stock. Himself.

Lou. 'Tis true.

Stock. Then I am happy; all my doubts, my cares, are over, and I may own him for my son.—(*Aside.*) Why, these are joyful tidings! come, my good friend, assist me in disposing your lovely daughter to accept this returning prodigal; he is no unprincipled, no hardened libertine: his love for you and virtue is the same.

Dud. 'Twere vile ingratitude in me to doubt his merit—What says my child?

O' Fla. Begging your pardon now, 'tis a frivolous sort of a question, that of your's, for you may see plainly enough by the young lady's looks, that she says a great deal, though she speaks never a word.

Charles. Well, sister, I believe the major has fairly interpreted the state of your heart.

Lou. I own it; and what must that heart be, which love, honour, and beneficence, like Mr. Belcour's, can make no impression on?

Stock. I thank you: What happiness has this hour brought to pass!

O' Fla. Why don't we all sit down to supper, then, and make a night on't?

Enter BELCOUR, introducing MISS RUSPORT, L.H.D.

Bel. Mr. Dudley, here is a fair refugee, who properly comes under your protection; she is equipped for Scotland, but your good fortune, which I have re-

lated to her, seems inclined to save you both the journey—Nay, madam, never go back ! you are amongst friends.

Charles. Charlotte !

Miss R. The same ; that fond, officious girl, that haunts you every where : that persecuting spirit—

Charles. Say rather, that protecting angel ; such you have been to me.

Miss R. O Charles, you have an honest, but proud heart.

Charles. Nay chide me not, dear Charlotte.

Bel. Seal up her lips, then ; she is an adorable girl ; her arms are open to you ; and love and happiness are ready to receive you.

Charles. Thus, then, I claim my dear, my destined wife. (*Embracing her.*)

Enter LADY RUSPORT, L.H.D.

Lady R. Heyday ! mighty fine ! wife, truly ! mighty well ! kissing, embracing—did ever any thing equal this ? Why, you shameless hussy !—But I won't condescend to waste a word upon you.—You, sir, you, Mr. Stockwell ; you fine, sanctified, fair-dealing man of conscience ; is this the principle you trade upon ? is this your neighbourly system, to keep a house of reception for runaway daughters, and young beggarly fortune-hunters ?

O' Fla. Be advised now, and don't put yourself in such a passion ; we were all very happy till you came.

Lady R. Stand away, sir ; hav'n't I reason to be in a passion ?

O' Fla. Indeed, honey and you have, if you knew all.

Lady R. Come, madam, I have found out your haunts ; dispose yourself to return home with me. Young man, let me never see you within my doors again : Mr. Stockwell, I shall report your behaviour, depend on it.

Stoek. Hold, madam, I cannot consent to lose miss Rusport's company this evening, and I am persuaded you won't insist upon it ; 'tis an unmotherly action to

interrupt your daughter's happiness in this manner, believe me it is.

Lady R. Her happiness truly! upon my word! and I suppose it's an unmotherly action to interrupt her ruin; for what but ruin must it be to marry a beggar? I think my sister had a proof of that, sir, when she made choice of you. (*To Captain Dudley.*)

Dud. Don't be too lavish of your spirits, lady Rusport.

O' Fla. By my soul, you'll have occasion for a sip of the cordial elixir by-and-by.

Stock. It don't appear to me, madam, that Mr. Dudley can be called a beggar.

Lady R. But it appears to me, Mr. Stockwell; I am apt to think a pair of colours cannot furnish a settlement quite sufficient for the heiress of sir Stephen Rusport.

Miss R. But a good estate, in aid of a commission, may do something.

Lady R. A good estate, truly! where should he get a good estate, pray?

Stock. Why, suppose now, a worthy old gentleman, on his death-bed, should have taken it in mind to leave him one—

Lady R. Hah! what's that you say?

O' Fla. O ho! you begin to smell a plot, do you?

Stock. Suppose there should be a paper in the world, that runs thus—"I do hereby give and bequeath all my estates, real and personal, to Charles Dudley, son of my late daughter Louisa, &c. &c. &c."

O' Fla. There's a fine parcel of &c.'s for your ladyship.

Lady R. Why, I am thunderstruck! by what contrivance, what villany, did you get possession of that paper?

Stock. There was no villany, madam, in getting possession of it; the crime was in concealing it, none in bringing it to light.

Lady R. Oh, that cursed lawyer, Varland!

O' Fla. You may say that, 'faith; he is a cursed lawyer, and a cursed piece of work I had to get the paper from him; your ladyship now was to have paid him five

thousand pounds for it : I forced him to give it me of his own accord, for nothing at all, at all !

Lady R. Is it you that has done this? am I foiled by your blundering contrivances, after all?

O'Fla. 'Twas a blunder, 'faith, but as natural a one as if I had made it o'purpose.

Charles. Come let us not oppress the fallen ; do right even now, and you shall have no cause to complain.

Lady R. Am I become an object of your pity, then? Insufferable ! confusion light amongst you ! marry, and be wretched : let me never see you more. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Miss R. She is outrageous ; I suffer for her, and blush to see her thus exposed.

Charles. Come, Charlotte, don't let this angry woman disturb our happiness : we will save her, in spite of herself ; your father's memory shall not be stained by the discredit of his second choice.

Miss R. I trust implicitly to your discretion, and am in all things your's.

Bel. Now, lovely, but obdurate, does not this example soften ?

Lou. What can you ask for more ? Accept my hand, accept my willing heart.

Bel. O, bliss unutterable ! brother, father, friend, and you, the author of this general joy—

O'Fla. Blessing of St. Patrick upon us all ! tis a night of wonderful and surprising ups and downs : I wish we were all fairly set down to supper, and there was an end on't.

Stock. Hold for a moment ! I have yet one word to interpose—Entitled by my friendship to a voice in your disposal, I have approved your match ; there yet remains a father's consent to be obtained.

Bel. Have I a father ?

Stock. You have a father ; did not I tell you I had a discovery to make ?—Compose yourself—you have a father, who observes, who knows, who loves you.

Bel. Keep me no longer in suspense : my heart is softened for the affecting discovery, and nature fits me to receive his blessing.

Stock. I am your father.

Bel. My father!—Do I live?

Stock. I am your father.

Bel. It is too much—my happiness overpowers me—to gain a friend, and find a father, is too much: I blush to think how little I deserve you.

(*They embrace.*)

Dud. See, children, how many new relations spring from this night's unforeseen events, to endear us to each other.

O' Fla. O'my conscience, I think we shall be all related by-and by.

Stock. Yes, Belcour, I have watched you with a patient, but inquiring eye, and I have discovered through the veil of some irregularities, a heart beaming with benevolence and animated nature; fallible indeed, but not incorrigible; and your election of this excellent young lady makes me glory in acknowledging you to be my son.

Bel. I thank you, and in my turn, glory in the father I have gained. Sensibly impressed with gratitude for such extraordinary dispensations, I beseech you, amiable Louisa, for the time to come, whenever you perceive me deviating into error or offence, bring only to my mind the providence of this night, and I will turn to reason and obey.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



EPILOGUE.

Written by D. G. Esq.

SPOKEN BY MRS. ABINGTON.

N.B. The lines in Italics are to be spoken in a catechise Tone.

Confess, good folks, has not Miss Rusport shown
Strange whims for SEVENTEEN HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE?

What, pawn her jewels!—there's a precious plan,

To extricate from want a brave *old* man:

And fall in love with poverty and honour;

A girl of fortune, fashion!—Fie upon her.

But do not think we females of the stage,

So dead to the refinements of the age,

That we agree with our old fashion'd poet;

I am point blank against him, and I'll show it:

And that my tongue may more politely run,

Make me a lady—Lady Blabington.

Now, with a rank and title to be free,

I'll make a catechism—and you shall see,

What is the *veritable Beaume de Vie*:

As I change place, I stand for that, or this,

My Lady questions first—then answers Miss.

(She speaks as my lady.)

“Come tell me child, what were our modes and dress,

In those strange times of that old fright Queen Bess?”

And now for Miss—

(She changes place, and speaks for Miss.)

When Bess was England's queen,

Ladies were dismal beings, seldom seen;

They rose betimes, and breakfasted as soon,

On beef and beer, and studied Greek till noon;

Unpainted cheeks with blush of health did glow,

Beruff'd and fardingal'd from top to toe,

Nor necks, nor ankles would they ever show.

Learnt Greek!—*(laughs.)*—Our outside head takes half a day;

Have we much time to dress the inside, pray?

No heads dress'd *à la Greque*; the ancients quote,

There may be learning in a *papillote*:

Cards are *our* classics; and I, Lady B.

EPILOGUE.

In learning will not yield to any she,
Of the late-founded *female* university.
But now for Lady Blab—

(She speaks as my lady.)

“ Tell me, Miss Nancy,
What sports and what employments did they fancy ?”

(Speaks as Miss.)

*The vulgar creatures seldom left their houses,
But taught their children, work'd, and lov'd their spouses;
The use of cards at Christmas only knew,
They play'd for little, and their games were few,
One-and-thirty Put, All-fours, and Lantera-Loo ;
They bore a race of mortals stout and boney,
And never heard the name of Macaroni,*

(Speaks as my Lady.)

“ Oh brava, brava ! that's my pretty dear—
Now let a modern modish fair appear ;
No more of these old dowdy maids and wives,
Tell how superior beings pass their lives.”

(Speaks as Miss.)

*Till noon they sleep, from noon till night they dress,
From night till morn they game it more or less,
Next night the same sweet course of joy run o'er,
Then the night after as the night before,
And the night after that, encore, encore !—*

(She comes forward.)

Thus with our cards we *shuffle* off all sorrow,
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow !
We *deal apace*, from youth unto our prime,
To the last moment of our *tabby*-time ;
And all our yesterdays, from rout and drum,
Have lighted fools with empty pockets home.
Thus do our lives with rapture roll away,
Not with the nonsense of our author's play ;
This is true life—true spirit—give it praise ;
Don't snarl and sigh for good Queen Bess's days :
For all you look so sour and bend the brow,
You all rejoice with me you're living now.



T. Wagman del. H. R. Cook, sculp.

MR. OXBERRY AS MAW WORM.

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Oxberry's Edition.

THE HYPOCRITE,

A COMEDY;

ALTERED FROM COLLEY CIBBER'S NON-JUROR,

By Isaac Bickerstaff.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE STREET,
AND C. CHAPPLE, 59, Pall-mall

1823.

Printed by the Press of W. Oxberry
8, White-hart Yard.

Remarks.

THE HYPOCRITE.

MOLIERE'S *Tartuffe* was introduced upon the English stage by Cibber, in his "NON-JUROR;" which was altered by Bickerstaff into "The Hypocrite." "The Hypocrite" is a lively, but very provoking comedy; and it is provoking from the nature of the subject. If such things are, it is provoking; or if they are not, that we should be made to believe them.

In the *Tartuffe*, the glaring improbability of the plot, the absurdity of a man's imposing on the credulity of another against the evidence of his senses, and without any proof of the sincerity of a religious charlatan but his own professions, is carried off by long formal speeches and pompous casuistry. We find our patience tired out, and our understandings perplexed, as if we were sitting in a court of law. *Tartuffe* is a plausible, fair-spoken, long-winded knave, who, if he could not be supposed to convince, might be supposed to confound his auditors. In the *Hypocrite* of Bickerstaff, the insidious, fawning, sophistical, French priest, is modernized into a low-lived, canting, impudent methodist preacher. Dr. Cantwell is a sturdy beggar, and nothing more; he is not an imposter, but a bully. There is not in any thing he says or does, the least reason why Sir John Lambert should admit him into his family and friendship; suffer him to make love to his wife and daughter; disinherit his son in his favour; and obstinately refuse to listen to any insinuation or proof offered against the virtue and piety of his treacherous inmate. It might be said that in the manners of the old French *regime*, there was something to account for the blind ascendancy acquired by the good priest over his benefactor, who might have submitted to be cuckolded, robbed, cheated, and insulted, as a tacit proof of his religion and loyalty. The inquisitorial power exercised by the church was then so great, that a man who refused to be priest-ridden, might very soon be suspected of designs against the state.

Such, at least, is the best account we can give of the tameness of Moliere's *Orgon*. But in this country nothing of the kind could happen. A fellow like Dr. Cantwell could only have got admittance into the kitchen of Sir John Lambert, or the ear of old Lady Lambert. The animal magnetism of such spiritual guides is, with us, directed against the weaker nerves of our female devotees. In the original, we admire the talents of the principal character; in the translation, we only wonder at the incredible weakness of his dupes. In short, the fault of the piece is, that the author has attempted to amalgamate two contradictory characters, by engrafting our vulgar methodist on the courtly French imposter, and this defect could not be remedied in the execution, however spirited or forcible. Mawworm is quite a local and national character, and admirably fitted into the piece.

We shall take this opportunity of saying a few words on the general character of Moliere, as a comic writer, as several of our stock-pieces are borrowed from him. In fact, he is as much an English as a French author—quite a *barbare* in all in which he excels. He was unquestionably one of the greatest comic geniuses that ever lived, a man of infinite wit, gaiety, and invention, full of life and laughter, the very soul of mirth and whim. But it cannot be denied that his plays are in general mere farces, without real nature or refined character, or common probability. They could not be carried on for a moment without a perfect collusion between the parties to wink at impossibilities, by contradicting and acting in defiance of all common sense. For instance, take the *Médecin Malgre lui*, (*The Mock Doctor*) in which a common wood-cutter voluntarily takes upon himself, and supports through a whole play, the character of a learned physician, without exciting the least suspicion, but which is, notwithstanding the absurdity of the plot, one of the most laughable and truly comic things that can be imagined. The rest of his lighter pieces are of the same description—mere gratuitous fictions and exaggerations of nature. As to his serious comedies, the *Tartuffe* and *Misanthrope*, nothing can be more objectionable, and the chief objection to them is, that nothing can be more hard than to read them through. They have the improbability and extravagance of the rest, united with the tedious common-place prosing of French declamation. What can exceed the absurdity of the *Misanthrope*, who leaves his mistress after every proof of her attachment and constancy, merely because she will not submit to the *technical formality* of going

to live with him in a desert? The character which she gives of his friends in the beginning of the play, are very admirable satires, but not comedy. The same remarks apply in a greater degree to the *Tartuffe*. The improbability is excessive. In one point of view, this play is indeed invaluable, as a lasting monument of the credulity of the French to all-verbal professions of virtue or wisdom; and its existence can only be accounted for, from that astonishing and tyrannical predominance, which words exercise over things in the mind of every Frenchman. The *Ecole des Femmes*, from which Wycherly has borrowed the "Country Wife," with the true spirit of original genius, is in our judgment by far the best of Moliere's serious comedies.

Bickerstaff, the author of the *Hypocrite*, and of several other popular pieces, was a native of Ireland, born probably about the year 1735, having been appointed one of the pages to Lord Chesterfield, when he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in 1746. He was one of the most successful dramatic writers of his day. Besides the *Hypocrite*, he was the author of *Love in a Village*, *The Maid of the Mill*, *Lionel and Clarissa*, *The Pantlock*, and *The Sultan*. *The Spoiled Child* has been attributed to him.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is one hour and thirty-four minutes—The half-price commences at nine o'clock.

Stage Directions.

R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.....		Left Hand.
S.E.....		Second Entrance.
U.E....		Upper Entrance.
M.D		Middle Door.
D.F..		Door in Flat.
R.H.D.....		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.....		Left Hand Door.

Costume.

SIR JOHN LAMBERT.

A brown cloth suit, lined with white silk.

DOCTOR CANTWELL.

A black cloth suit and speckled stockings.

COLONEL LAMBERT.

Full dress of a colonel.

DARNLEY.

Plain modern suit.

SEYWARD.

Plain modern suit.

MAWWORM.

Black coat, flowered waistcoat, black breeches, light blue stockings, and shoes, with small brass buckles.

OLD LADY LAMBERT.

A black satin dress, with black velvet cuffs, and bobins, white stomacher, and black hood for the head.

YOUNG LADY LAMBERT.

White satin dress, white leno upper dress with white satin trimming and lace.

CHARLOTTE.

A blue satin body trimmed, silver leno skirt festooned at bottom with blue and silver flowers.

BETTY.

Coloured cotton gown.

Persons Represented.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	1785. <i>Covent-garden</i>
<i>Sir John Lambert</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Hull.
<i>Doctor Cantwell</i>	Mr. Dowton.	Mr. F. Aickin
<i>Colonel Lambert</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Darnley</i>	Mr. S. Penley.	Mr. Wroughton
<i>Seyward</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Farren.
<i>Mauworm</i>	Mr. Oxberry.	Mr. Edwin
<i>Old Lady Lambert</i>	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Webb.
<i>Young Lady Lambert</i>	Mrs. Orger.	Mrs. Bates.
<i>Charlotte</i>	Mrs. Davison.	Mrs. Abington.
<i>Ritty</i>	Mrs. Scott.	Miss Stuart,

THE HYPOCRITE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in Sir John Lambert's House.*

Enter Sir JOHN LAMBERT, I.H. followed by COLONEL LAMBERT.

Col. Lamb. Pray consider, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. So I do, sir, that I am her father, and will bestow her as I please.

Col. Lamb. I do not dispute your authority, sir; but as I am your son too, I think it my duty to be concerned for your honour. Have not you countenanced his addresses to my sister? Has not she received them? Mr. Darnley's birth and fortune are well known to you; and I dare swear, he may defy the world to lay a blemish on his character.

Sir J. Lamb. Why then, sir, since I am to be catechised, I must tell you, I do not like his character: he is a world-server, a libertine, and has no more religion than you have.

Col. Lamb. Sir, we neither of us think it proper to make a boast of our religion; but, if you will please to enquire, you will find that we go to church as orderly as the rest of our neighbours.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! you go to church! you go to church—Wonderful! wonderful! to bow, and grin, and cough, and sleep: a fine act of devotion indeed.

Col. Lamb. Well, but dear sir,—

Sir J. Lamb. Colonel, you are an atheist.

Col. Lamb. Pardon me, sir, I am none: it is a cha-

racter I abhor; and next to that, I abhor the character of an enthusiast.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, you do so; an enthusiast! this is the fashionable phrase, the bye-word, the nick-name, that our pleasure-loving generation give to those few who have a sense of true sanctity.

Col. Lamb. Say canting, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. I tell you what, son, as I have told you more than once, you will draw some heavy judgment on your head some day or other.

Col. Lamb. So says the charitable Doctor Cantwell: you have taken him into your house, and, in return, he gives over half your family to the devil.

Sir J. Lamb. Do not abuse the doctor, colonel; it is not the way to my favour. I know you cannot bear him, because he is not one of your mincing preachers.—He holds up the glass to your enormities, shows you to yourselves in your genuine colours.

Col. Lamb. I always respect piety and virtue, sir; but there are pretenders to religion, as well as to courage: and as we never find the truly brave to be such as make much noise about their valour; so, I apprehend, the truly good seldom or never deal much in grimace.

Sir J. Lamb. Very well, sir; this is very well.

Col. Lamb. Besides, sir, I would be glad to know, by what authority the doctor pretends to exercise the clerical function. It does not appear clearly to me that he ever was in orders.

Sir J. Lamb. That is no business of yours, sir. But I am better informed. However, he has the call of zeal.

Col. Lamb. Zeal!

Sir J. Lamb. Why, colonel, you are in a passion.

Col. Lamb. I own, I cannot see with temper, sir, so many religious mountebanks impose on the unwary multitude; wretches, who make a trade of religion, and shew an uncommon concern for the next world, only to raise their fortunes with greater security in this.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Lamb. Colonel, let me hear no more; I see

you are too hardened to be converted now ; but since you think it your duty as a son to be concerned for my errors, I think it as much mine, as a father, to be concerned for yours. If you think fit to amend them, so ; if not, take the consequence.

Col. Lamb. Well, sir, may I ask you without offence, if the reasons you have given me are your only reasons for discountenancing Mr. Darnley's addresses to my sister ?

Sir John Lamb. Are they not flagrant ? Would you have me marry my daughter to a pagan ?

Col. Lamb. He intends this morning paying his respects to you, in hopes to obtain your final consent ; and desired me to be present as a mediator of articles between you.

Sir J. Lamb. I am glad to hear it.

Col. Lamb. That's kind indeed, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. May be not, sir ; for I will not be at home when he comes ; and because I will not tell a lie for the matter, I will go out this moment.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Col. Lamb. Nay, dear Sir,—

Sir J. Lamb. And, do you hear,—because I will not deceive him, either tell him I would not have him lose his time in fooling after your sister,—in short, I have another man in my head for her. *[Exit, R.H.]*

Col. Lamb. Another man ! it would be worth one's while to know him : pray heaven this canting hypocrite has not got some beggarly rascal in his eye for her. I must rid the house of him at any rate, or all the settlement I can hope for from my father, is a castle in the air.—My sister may be ruined too—(*Charlotte sings without.*)—Here she comes. If there be another man in the case, she, no doubt, can let me into the secret.

Enter CHARLOTTE, L.H.

Sister, good morrow ; I want to speak with you.

Charl. Pr'thee, then, dear brother, don't put on that wise politic face, as if your regiment was going

to be disbanded, or sent to the West Indies, and you obliged to follow it.

Col. Lamb. Come, come, a truce with your railery: what I have to ask of you is serious, and I beg you would be so in your answer.

Charl. Well, then, provided it is not upon the subject of love, I will be so—but make haste too—for I have not had my tea yet.

Col. Lamb. Why, it is, and it is not, on that subject.

Charl. Oh, I love a riddle, dearly.—Come—let's hear it.

Col. Lamb. Nay, psha! if you will be serious, say so.

Charl. O lard, sir; I beg your pardon—there—there's my whole form and features totally disengaged and lifeless, at your service; now, put them in what posture of attention you may think fit.

(Leaning against him awkwardly.)

Col. Lamb. Was there ever such a giddy devil! Pr'ythee, stand up. I have been talking with my father, and he declares positively you shall not receive any further addresses from Mr. Darnley.

Charl. Are you serious?

Col. Lamb. He said so this minute, and with some warmth.

Charl. I'm glad on't, with all my heart.

Col. Lamb. How! glad!

Charl. To a degree. Do you think a man has any more charms for me for my father's liking him? No, sir—if Mr. Darnley can make his way to me now, he is obliged to me, and to me only. Besides, now it may have the face of an amour indeed, now one has something to struggle for; there's difficulty, there's danger, there's the dear spirit of contradiction in it too—Oh, I like it mightily!

Col. Lamb. I am glad this does not make you think he worse of Darnley;—but a father's consent might have elipt a pair of horses more to your coach, perhaps, and the want of it may pinch your fortune.

Charl. Burn fortune; am not I a fine woman? and have I not I twenty thousand pounds in my own hands?

Col. Lamb. Yes, sister, but with all your charms, you have had them in your possession almost these four years.

Charl. Psha! and have not I had the full swing of my own airs and humours these four years? but if I humour my father, I warrant he'll make it three or four thousand more, with some unlick'd lout,—a comfortable equivalent, truly!—No, no; let him light his pipe with his consent, if he please. Wilful against wise, for a wager.

Col. Lamb. But pray, sister, has my father ever proposed any other man to you?

Charl. Another man! let me know why you ask, and I'll tell you.

Col. Lamb. Why, the last words he said to me were, that he had another man in his head for you.

Charl. And who is it?—who is it?—tell me, dear brother!

Col. Lamb. Why you don't so much as seem surprised!

Charl. No, but I'm impatient, and that's as well.

Col. Lamb. Why, how now, sister?

Charl. Why, sure, brother, you know very little of female happiness, if you suppose the surprise of a new lover ought to shock a woman of my temper:—don't you know that I'm a coquet?

Col. Lamb. If you are, you are the first that ever was sincere enough to own her being so.

Charl. To a lover, I grant you; but not to you; I make no more of you, than a sister; I can say any thing to you.

Col. Lamb. I should have been better pleased, if you had not owned it to me—it's a hateful character.

Charl. Ay, it's no matter for that; it's violently pleasant, and there's no law against it, that I know of.

Col. Lamb. Darnley's like to have a hopeful time with you.

Charl. Well, but don't you really know who it is my father intends me?

Col. Lamb. Not I, really: but I imagined you might, and therefore thought to advise with you about it.

Charl. Nay, he has not opened his lips to me yet. Are you sure he's gone out?

Col. Lamb. You are very impatient to know, me thinks; what have you to do to concern yourself about any man but Darnley?

Charl. O lud! O lud! Pr'thee, brother, don't be so wise; if you had an empty house to let, would you be displeased to hear there were two people about it? Besides, to be a little serious, Darnley has a tincture of jealousy in his temper, which nothing but a substantial rival can cure.

Col. Lamb. Oh, your servant, madam! now you talk reason. I am glad you are concerned enough for Darnley's faults, to think them worth your mending—ha, ha!

Charl. Concerned! why did I say that?—look you, I'll deny it all to him—well, if I ever am serious with him again—

Col. Lamb. Here he comes; be as merry with him as you please.

Charl. Psha!

(Charlotte sits down, takes a book, and reads.)

Enter DARNLEY, L.H.

Darn. My dear colonel, your servant.

Col. Lamb. I am glad you did not come sooner; for in the humour my father left me, 'twould not have been a proper time for you to have pressed your affair—I touched upon it—but—I'll tell you more presently; in the meantime, lose no ground with my sister.

Darn. I shall always think myself obliged to your friendship, let my success be what it will—*(Crosses to centre.)* Madam—your most obedient—what have you got there, pray?

Charl. (Reading.) Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose;

Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those.

Darn. Pray, madam, what is it?

Charl. Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;

Darn. Nay, I will see.

Charl. Oft she rejects, but never once offends.

Col. Lamb. Have a care; she has dipt into her own character, and she'll never forgive you if you don't let her go through with it.

Darn. I beg your pardon, madam.

Charl. Bright as the sun her eyes the gazers strike,
And like the sun they shine on all alike—um—

Darn. That is something like indeed.

Col. Lamb. You would say so, if you knew all.

Darn. All what? pray what do you mean?

Col. Lamb. Have a little patience; I'll tell you immediately.

Charl. If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face—and you'll forget them all.

Is not that natural, Mr. Darnley?

Darn. For a woman to expect, it is indeed.

Charl. And can you blame her, when 'tis at the same time a proof of the poor man's passion, and her power?

Darn. So that you think, the greatest compliment a lover can make his mistress, is to give up his reason to her.

Charl. (*Rises.*) Certainly; for what have your lordly sex to boast of but your understanding? and till that's entirely surrendered to her discretion, while the least sentiment holds out against her, a woman must be downright vain to think her conquest completed.

Darn. There we differ, madam; for, in my opinion, nothing but the most excessive vanity could value or desire such a conquest.

Charl. Oh, d'ye hear him, brother? the creature reasons with me! nay, has the effrontery to think me in the wrong too! O lud! he'd make a horrid tyrant—positively, I won't have him.

Darn. Well, my comfort is, no other man will easily know whether you'll have him or not.

Charl. Am not I a horrid vain, silly creature, Mr. Darnley?

Darn. A little bordering upon the baby, I must own.

Charl. Laud! how can you love a body so then, but I don't think you love me though—do you?

Darn. Yes 'faith, I do; and so shamefully, that I'm in hopes you doubt it.

Charl. Poor man! he'd fain bring me to reason.

Darn. I would indeed. Nay, were it but possible to make you serious only when you should be so, I should think you the most amiable—

Charl. O lud! he's civil—

Darn. Come, come, be generous, and swear at least you'll never marry another.

Charl. Ah, laud! now you have spoiled all again: besides, how can I be sure of that, before I have seen this other man my brother spoke to me of?

Darn. What riddle's this?

Col. Lamb. I told you, you did not know all. To be serious, my father went out but now, on purpose to avoid you. In short, he absolutely retracts his promises; says he would not have you fool away your time after my sister: and in plain terms told me, he had another man in his head for her.

Darn. Another man! who? what is he? did not he name him?

Col. Lamb. No; nor has he yet spoke of him to my sister.

Darn. This is unaccountable!—what can have given him this sudden turn?

Col. Lamb. Some whim our conscientious doctor has put into his head, I'll lay my life.

Darn. He! he can't be such a villain; he professes a friendship for me.

Col. Lamb. So much the worse.

Darn. But on what pretence, what grounds, what reason? what interest can he have to oppose me?

Col. Lamb. Are you really now as unconcerned as you seem to be? (Crosses to centre.)

Charl. You are a strange dunce, brother;—you know no more of love than I do of a regiment. You shall see now how I'll comfort him. Poor Darnley, ha, ha, ha! *(Crosses to centre.)*

Darn. I don't wonder at your good humour, madam, when you have so substantial an opportunity to make me uneasy for life.

Charl. O lud! how sententious he is! well, his reproaches have that greatness of soul—the confusion they give is insupportable.—Betty!—is the tea ready?

Enter BETTY, R.H.D.

Betty. Yes, madam.

Charl. Mr. Darnley, your servant.

[Exeunt Charlotte and Betty, R.H.D.]

Col. Lamb. So; you have made a fine piece of work on't, indeed!

Darn. Dear Tom, pardon me if I speak a little freely; I own, the levity of her behaviour, at this time, gives me harder thoughts than I once believed it possible to have of her.

Col. Lamb. Indeed, my friend, you mistake her.

Darn. Nay, nay; had she any real concern for me, the apprehensions of a man's addresses, whom yet she never saw, must have alarmed her to some degree of seriousness.

Col. Lamb. Not at all; for let this man be whom he will, I take her levity as a proof of her resolution to have nothing to do with him.

Darn. And pray, sir, may I not as well suspect, that this artful delay of her good-nature to me now, is meant as a provisional defence against my reproaches, in case, when she has seen this man, she should think it convenient to prefer him.

Col. Lamb. No, no; she's giddy, but not capable of so studied a falsehood.

Darn. But still, what could she mean by going away so abruptly?

Col. Lamb. You grew too grave for her.

Darn. Why, who could bear such trifling?

Col. Lamb. You should have laughed at her.

Darn. I can't love at that easy rate.

Col. Lamb. No; if you could, the uneasiness would lie on her side.

Darn. Do you then really think she has any thing in her heart for me?

Col. Lamb. Ay, marry, sir—ah! if you could but get her to own that seriously now—lord, how you could love her!

Darn. And so I could by heaven!

Col. Lamb. Well, well; I'll undertake for her; if my father don't stand in the way, we are well enough.

Darn. What says my lady? you don't think she's against us?

Col. Lamb. I dare say she is not. She's of so soft, so sweet a disposition—

Darn. Pr'thee, how came so fine a woman to marry your father, with such a vast inequality of years?

Col. Lamb. Want of fortune, Frank: she was poor and beautiful—he rich and amorous—she made him happy, and he her—

Darn. A lady—

Col. Lamb. And a jointure—now she's the only one in the family that has power with our precise doctor; and, I dare engage, she'll use it with him to persuade my father from any thing that is against your interest. By the way, you must know, I have some shrewd suspicion, that this sanctified rogue is in love with her.

Darn. In love!

Col. Lamb. You shall judge by the symptoms; but hush!—here he comes, with my grandmother—step this way, and I'll tell you. [*Exeunt*, R.H.]

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL and OLD LADY LAMBERT, L.H. followed by SEYWARD.

Dr. Cant. Charles, step up into my study; bring down a dozen more of those manuals of devotion, with the last hymn I composed; and when he calls, give them to Mr. Mawworm: and, do you hear, if any one

enquire for me, say I am gone to Newgate and the
Middlesex, to distribute alms. [*Exit Seyward, L.H.*]

Old Lady Lamb. Well, but worthy doctor, why will you go to the prisons yourself? cannot you send the money?—ugly distempers are often caught there; have a care of your health; let us keep one good man, at least, among us.

Dr. Cant. Alas, madam! I am not a good man; I am a guilty, wicked sinner, full of iniquity; the greatest villain that ever breathed; every instant of my life is clouded with stains; it is one continued series of crimes and defilements: you do not know what I am capable of: you indeed take me for a good man, but the truth is, I am a worthless creature.

Old Lady Lamb. Have you then stumbled? alas! if it be so, who shall walk upright? What horrid crime have you been hurried into, that calls for this severe self-recrimination?

Dr. Cant. None, madam, that perhaps humanity may call very enormous; yet, am I sure that my thoughts never stray a moment from celestial contemplations? do they not sometimes, before I am aware, turn to things of this earth? am I not often hasty, and surprised into wrath? nay, the instance is recent; for, last night, being snarled at, and bit, by Minxy, your daughter-in-law's lap-dog, I am conscious I struck the little beast with a degree of passion, for which I have never been able to forgive myself since.

Old Lady Lamb. O, worthy, humble soul! this is a slight offence, which your suffering and mortifications may well atone for.

Dr. Cant. No, madam, no; I want to suffer; I ought to be mortified; and I am obliged now to tell you, that for my soul's sake, I must quit your good son's family; I am pampered too much here, live too much at my ease.

Old Lady Lamb. Good doctor!

Dr. Cant. Alas, madam! it is not you that should shed tears; it is I that ought to weep; you are a pure woman.

Old Lady Lamb. I pure! who, I! no, no; sinful,

sinful—but do not talk of quitting our family; what will become of us—for friendship—for charity—

Dr. Cant. Enough; say no more, madam; I submit; while I can do good, it is my duty.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT and DARNLEY R.H.U I

Col. Lamb. Your ladyship's most humble servant.

Old Lady Lamb. Grandson, how do you?

Darn. Good day to you, doctor!

Dr. Cant. Mr. Darnley, I am your most humble servant; I hope you and the good Colonel will stay, and join in the private duties of the family.

Old Lady Lamb. No, doctor, no; it is too early, the sun has not risen upon them; but I doubt not, the day will come.

Dr. Cant. I warrant they would go to a play now!

Old Lady Lamb. Would they?—I am afraid they would.

Darn. Why, I hope it is no sin, madam; if I am not mistaken, I have seen your ladyship at a play.

Old Lady Lamb. Me, sir! see me at a play! you may have seen the prince of darkness, or some of his imps, in my likeness, perhaps—

Darn. Well but, madam—

Old Lady Lamb. Mr. Darnley, do you think I would commit a murder?

Dr. Cant. No, sir, no; these are not the plants usually to be met with in that rank soil; the seeds of wickedness indeed sprout up every where too fast, but a play-house is the devil's hot-bed.

Col. Lamb. And yet, doctor, I have known some of the leaders of your tribe, as scrupulous as they are, who have been willing to gather fruit there for the use of the brethren—as in case of a benefit—

Dr. Cant. The charity covereth the sin: and it may be lawful to turn the wages of abomination to the comfort of the righteous.

Col. Lamb. Ha, ha, ha!

Dr. Cant. Reprobate! reprobate!

Col. Lamb. What is that you mutter, sirrah?

Old Lady Lamb. Oh, heavens!

Darn. Let him go, colonel.

Col. Lamb. A canting hypocrite!

Dr. Cant. Very well, sir; your father shall know my treatment.

[*Exit, R.H.*

Old Lady Lamb. Let me run out of the house; I shall have it fall upon my head, if I stay among such wicked wretches. O grandson, grandson! [*Exit, L.H.*

Darn. Was there ever so insolent a rascal!

Col. Lamb. The dog will one day provoke me to beat his brains out.

Darn. But what the devil is he; whence comes he? what is his original? how has he so ingratiated himself with your father, so as to get footing in the house?

Col. Lamb. O, sir, he is here in quality of chaplain; he was first introduced by the good old lady that's just gone out. You know, she has been a long time a frequenter of our modern conventicles, where, it seems, she got acquainted with this sanctified pastor. His disciples believe him a saint, and my poor father, who has been for some time tainted with their pernicious principles, has been led into the same snare.

Darn. Hah! here's your sister again.

Enter CHARLOTTE and DOCTOR CANTWELL, L.H.

Charl. You'll find, sir, I will not be used thus; nor shall your credit with my father protect your insolence to me.

Col. Lamb. What's the matter?

Charl. Nothing, pray be quiet—I don't want you—stand out of the way—how durst you bolt with such authority into my chamber, without giving me notice?

Darn. Confusion!

Col. Lamb. Hold—if my father don't resent this, 'tis then time enough for me to do it.

Dr. Cant. Compose yourself, madam; I came by your father's desire, who being informed that you were entertaining Mr. Darnley, grew impatient, and gave his positive commands that you attend him instantly, or he himself, he says, will fetch you.

Darn. Ay, now the storm is rising.

Dr. Cant. So, for what I have done, madam, I had his authority, and shall leave him to answer you.

Charl. 'Tis false. He gave you no authority to insult me; or if he had, did you suppose I would bear it from you? What is it you presume upon? your function? does that exempt you from the manners of a gentleman?

Dr. Cant. Shall I have an answer to your father, lady?

Charl. I'll send him none by you.

Dr. Cant. I shall inform him so. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Charl. A saucy puppy!

Col. Lamb. Pray, sister, what has the fellow done to you?

Charl. Nothing.

Darn. I beg you would tell us, madam.

Charl. Nay, no great matter—but I was sitting carelessly in my dressing-room—a—a fastening my garter, and this impudent cur comes bounce in upon me.

Darn. The rogue must be corrected.

Col. Lamb. Yet, egad, I cannot help laughing at the accident! what a ridiculous figure must she make? ha, ha!

Charl. Hah! you're as impudent as he, I think.

Darn. Now, dear Tom, speak to her before she goes.

Charl. What does he says, brother?

Col. Lamb. Why, he wants to have me speak to you, and I would have him do it himself.

Charl. Ay; come, do, Darnley; I am in a good humour now.

Darn. Oh, Charlotte, my heart is bursting!

(*Crosses to centre.*)

Charl. Well, well; out with it, then.

Darn. Your father now, I see, is bent on parting us—nay, what's worse, perhaps will give you to another: I cannot speak—imagine what I want from you.

Charl. Well—O lud! one looks so silly tho' when one is serious—O gad—in short, I cannot get it out.

Col. Lamb. I warrant you; try again.

Charl. O lud—well—if one must be teased, then—why he must hope, I think.

Darn. Is't possible!—thus—

Col. Lamb. Buz—not a syllable; she has done very well. I bar all heroics; if you press it too far, I'll hold six to four she's off again in a moment.

Darn. I'm silenced.

Charl. Now am I on tiptoe to know what odd fellow my father has found out for me.

Darn. I'd give something to know him.

Charl. He's in a terrible fuss at your being here, I find.

Col. Lamb. 'Sdeath, here he comes!

Charl. Now we are all in a fine pickle!

[*Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT hastily, R.H. and looking sternly at Darnley, takes Charlotte under his arm, and carries her off, R.H. Colonel Lambert and Darnley Exeunt, L.H.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Anti-Chamber in Sir John Lambert's House.*

Enter SRYWARD, with a writing in his hand, from the folding doors.

Sey. 'Tis so—I have long suspected where his zeal would end, in the making of his private fortune. But then, to found it on the ruin of his patron's children! I shudder at the villany!—what desperation may a son be driven to, so barbarously disinherited! Besides, his daughter, fair Charlotte, too, is wronged; wronged in the tenderest point: for so extravagant is this settlement, that it leaves her not a shilling unless she marries with the doctor's consent, which is intended, by what I have heard, as an expedient to oblige her to marry the doctor himself. Now, 'twere but an honest

part to let Charlotte know the snare that is laid for her. This deed's not signed, and may yet be prevented. It shall be so.—Yes, charming creature, I adore you!—And, though I am sensible my passion is without hope, I may indulge it thus far, at least; I may have the merit of serving you, and perhaps the pleasure to know you think yourself obliged by me.

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT, LADY LAMBERT, and CHARLOTTE, L.H.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! Seyward, your uncle, wants you to transcribe some hymns.

Seyw. Sir, I'll wait on him. [*Crosses and Exit*, L.H.]

Charl. A pretty well-bred fellow that.

Sir J. Lamb. Ay, ay; but he has better qualities than his good breeding.

Charl. He's always clean, too.

Sir J. Lamb. I wonder, daughter, when you will take notice of a man's real merit. Humph—well-bred and clean, forsooth! Would not one think, now, she was describing a coxcomb? When do you hear my wife talk at this rate? and yet she is as young as your fantastical ladyship.

Lady Lamb. Charlotte is of a cheerful temper, my dear, but I know you don't think she wants discretion.

Sir J. Lamb. I shall try that presently: and you, my dear, shall judge between us. In short, daughter, your course of life is but one continued round of playing the fool to no purpose; and therefore I am resolved to make you think seriously, and marry.

Charl. That I shall do before I marry, sir, you may depend upon it.

Sir J. Lamb. Um—that I am not so sure of: but you may depend upon my having thought seriously, and that's as well: for the person I intend you, is, of all the world, the only man who can make you truly happy.

Charl. And of all the world, sir, that's the only man I'll positively marry.

Lady Lamb. You have rare courage, Charlotte ; if I had such a game to play, I should be frightened out of my wits.

Charl. Lord ! madam, he'll make nothing of it, depend upon it. *(Crosses to centre.)*

Sir J. Lamb. Mind what I say to you. This wonderful man, I say—first, in his public character, is religious, zealous, and charitable.

Charl. Very well, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. In his private character, sober.

Charl. I should hate a sot.

Sir J. Lamb. Chaste.

Charl. A-hem ! *(Stifling a laugh.)*

Sir J. Lamb. What is it you sneer at, madam ? You want one of your fine gentleman rakes, I suppose, that are snapping at every woman they meet with.

Charl. No, no, sir ; I am very well satisfied.—I— I should not care for such a sort of a man, no more than I should for one that every woman was ready to snap at.

Sir J. Lamb. No, you'll be secure from jealousy : he has experience, ripeness of years—he is almost forty-nine. Your sex's vanity will have no charms for him.

Charl. But all this while, sir, I don't find that he has charms for our sex's vanity. How does he look ? —Is he tall, well made ?—Does he dress, sing, talk, laugh, and dance well ?—Has he good hair, good teeth, fine eyes ?—Does he keep a chaise, coach, and vis-a-vis ?—Has he six prancing ponies ?—Does he wear the prince's uniform, and subscribe to Brookes's ?

Sir J. Lamb. Was there ever so profligate a creature ! What will this age come to ?

Lady Lamb. Nay, Charlotte, here I must be against you. Now you are blind indeed. A woman's happiness has little to do with the pleasure her husband takes in his own person.

Sir J. Lamb. Right.

Lady Lamb. It is not how he looks, but how he loves ; is the point.

Sir J. Lamb. Good again.

Lady Lamb. And a wife is much more secure that has charms for her husband, than when the husband has only charms for her.

Sir J. Lamb. Admirable! go on, my dear.

Lady Lamb. Do you think a woman of five-and-twenty may not be much happier with an honest man of fifty, than the finest woman of fifty with a young fellow of five-and-twenty.

Sir J. Lamb. Mark that!

Charl. Ay, but when two five-and-twentics come together—dear papa, you must allow they have a chance to be fifty times as pleasant and frolicsome.

Sir J. Lamb. Frolicsome! Why, you sensual idiot, what have frolics to do with solid happiness? I am ashamed of you.—Go, you talk worse than a girl at a boarding school.—Frolicsome! as if marriage was only a licence for two people to play the fool according to law. Methinks, madam, you have a better example of happiness before your face.—Here's one has ten times your understanding, and she, you find, has made a different choice.

Charl. Lord, sir, how you talk! you don't consider people's tempers. I don't say my lady is not in the right; but then, you know, papa, she's a prude, and I am a coquette; she becomes her character very well, I don't deny it; and I hope you see every thing I do, is as consistent with mine.—Your wise people may talk what they will, but 'tis constitution governs us all: and be assured, you will no more be able to bring me to endure a man of forty-nine, than you can persuade my lady to dance in church to the organ.

Sir J. Lamb. Why, you wicked wretch! could any thing persuade you to do that?

Charl. Lord, sir; I wont answer for what I might do, if the whim was in my head; besides, you know I always loved a little flirtation.

Sir J. Lamb. O horrible! flirtation! My poor sister has ruined her; leaving her fortune in her own hand, has turned her brain. In short, Charlotte, your sen-

ments, of life are shameful, and I am resolved upon your instant reformation: therefore, as an earnest of your obedience, I shall first insist that you never see young Darnley more; for, in one word, the good and pious doctor Cantwell's the man that I have decreed for your husband.

Charl. Ho! ho! ho!

(Lady Lambert retires up the stage.)

Sir J. Lamb. 'Tis very well; this laugh you think becomes you, but I shall spoil your mirth—no more—give me a serious answer.

Charl. I ask your pardon, sir: I should not have smiled indeed, could I have supposed it possible that you were serious.

Sir J. Lamb. You'll find me so.

Charl. I'm sorry for it; but I have an objection to the doctor, sir, that most fathers think a substantial one.

Sir J. Lamb. Name it.

Charl. Why, sir, we know nothing of his fortune; he's not worth a groat.

Sir J. Lamb. That's more than you know, madam; I am able to give him a better estate than I am afraid you'll deserve.

Charl. How! sir!

Sir J. Lamb. I have told you what's my will, and shall leave you to think on't.

Enter SEYWARD, L.H.

Seyw. Sir, if you are at leisure, the doctor desires to speak with you, upon business of importance.

Sir J. Lamb. I will come to him immediately.—

[Exit Seyward, L.H.]—Daughter, I am called away, and therefore have only time to tell you, as my last resolution, doctor Cantwell is your husband, or I'm no more your father. *[Exit, L.H.]*

(Lady Lambert advances.)

Charl. O madam! I am at my wit's end; not for the little fortune I may lose in disobeying my father,

but it startles me to find what a dangerous influence this fellow has over all his actions.

Lady Lamb. Here's your brother.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT, R.H.

Col. Lamb. Madam, your most obedient.—Well, —(*Crosses to centre.*)—sister, is the secret out? Who is this pretty fellow my father has picked up for you?

Charl. Even our agreeable doctor.

Col. Lamb. You are not serious?

Lady Lamb. He's the very man, I can assure you, sir

Col. Lamb. Confusion! what would the cormorant devour the whole family? Your ladyship knows he is secretly in love with you too.

Lady Lamb. Fic, fic, colonel.

Col. Lamb. I ask your pardon, madam, if I speak too freely: but I am sure, by what I have seen, your ladyship must suspect something of it.

Lady Lamb. I am sorry any body else has seen it: but I must own, his behaviour to me of late, both in private and before company, has been something warmer than I thought became him.

Col. Lamb. How are these opposites to be reconciled? Can the rascal have the assurance to think both points are to be carried?

Charl. Truly, one would not suspect the gentleman to be so termagant.

Col. Lamb. Especially while he pretends to be so shocked at all indecent amours. In the country, he used to make the maids lock up the turkey cocks every Saturday night, for fear they should gallant the hens on a Sunday.

Lady Lamb. Oh! ridiculous!

Col. Lamb. Upon my life, madam, my sister told me so.

Charl. I tell you so, you impudent—

Lady Lamb. Fie, Charlotte; he only jests with you.

Charl. How can you be such a monster to stay playing the fool here, when you have more reason to be

frightened out of your wits? You don't know, perhaps, that my father declares he'll settle a fortune upon this fellow too.

Col. Lamb. What do you mean?

Lady Lamb. 'Tis too true; 'tis not three minutes since he said so.

Col. Lamb. Nay, then, it is time indeed his eyes were opened; and give me leave to say, madam, 'tis only in your power.

Lady Lamb. What 'is't you propose?

Col. Lamb. Why, if this fellow, which I'm sure of, is really in love with you, give him a fair opportunity to declare himself, and leave me to make my advantage of it.

Lady Lamb. I should be loth to do a wrong thing.

Charl. Dear madam, it is the only way in the world to expose him to my father.

Lady Lamb. I'll think of it.

Col. Lamb. Pray do, madam; but in the mean time I must leave you—poor Darnley stays for me at the Smyrna, and will sit upon thorns till I bring him an account of his new rival.

Charl. Well, well, get you gone then; here is my grandmother. [Exit Col. L.H.D.]

Enter OLD LADY LAMBERT, L.H.

Lady Lamb. This is kind, madam; I hope your ladyship's come to dine with us.

Old Lady Lamb. No; don't be afraid: only in my way from Tottenham Court, I just called to see whether any dreadful accident had happened to the family since I was here last.

Lady Lamb. Accident, did your ladyship say?

Old Lady Lamb. I shall be sorry, daughter, but not surprised, when I hear it; for there are goings on under this roof, that will bring temporal punishments along with them.

Lady Lamb. Indeed, madam! you astonish me!

Old Lady Lamb. We'll drop the subject; and I beg

leave to address myself to you, Miss Charlotte; I see you—(*Crosses to centre.*)—have a bit of lace upon your neck; I desire to know what you wear it for.

Charl. Wear it for, madam! it's the fashion.

Old Lady Lamb. In short, I have been at my linen-draper's to-day, and have brought you some thick muslin, which I desire you will make handkerchiefs of—for I must tell you that slight covering is indecent, and gives much offence.

Lady Lamb. Indecent, did your ladyship say?

Old Lady Lamb. Yes, daughter-in-law. Doctor Cantwell complains to me that he cannot sit at table, the sight of her bare neck disturbs him so; and he's a good man, and knows what indecency is.

Charl. Yes, indeed; I believe he does, better than any one in this house. But you may tell the doctor from me, madam, that he is an impudent coxcomb, a puppy, and deserves to have his bones broke.

Old Lady Lamb. Fie, Charlotte, fie! He speaks but for your good, and this is the grateful return you make.

Charl. Grateful return, madam!—how can you be so partial to that hypocrite?—The doctor is one of those who start at a feather.—Poor good man; yet he has his vices of the graver sort—

Old Lady Lamb. Come, come; I wish you would follow his precepts, whose practice is conformable to what he teaches.—Virtuous man!—Above all sensual regards, he considers the world merely as a collection of dirt and pebble-stones.—How has he weaned me from temporal connexions! My heart is now set upon nothing sublunary; and, I thank heaven, I am so insensible to every thing in this vain world, that I could see you, my son, my daughters, my brothers, my grandchildren, all expire before me; and mind it no more than the going out of so many snuffs of candle.

Charl. Upon my word, madam, it is a very humane disposition you have been able to arrive at, and your family is much obliged to the doctor for his instructions.

Old Lady Lamb. Well, child, I have nothing to say to you at present; heaven mend you, that's an

Lady Lamb. But pray, madam, stay and dine with us.

Old Lady Lamb. No, daughter ; I have said it, and you know I never tell a lie ; but here's my son, if you'll give me leave, I'll stay and speak to him.

Lady Lamb. Your ladyship's time is your own.

Charl. Ay, and here's that abominable doctor.—This fellow puts me beyond my patience.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

[*Exeunt Lady Lambert and Charlotte, L.H.*]

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT *and* DR. CANTWELL, R.H.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, madam, madam ! I'm glad you're here to join me in solicitations to the doctor.—Here is my mother, friend, my mother ; a pious woman ; you will hear her, more worthy to advise you than I am.

Dr. Cant. Alas ! the dear good lady, I will kiss her hand !—but what advice can she give me ? The riches of this world, sir, have no charms for me ; I am not dazzled with their false glare ; and was I, I repeat it, to accept of the trust you want to repose in me, heaven knows, it would only be lest the means should not fall into wicked hands, who would not lay it out as I should do, for the glory of heaven, and the good of my neighbour.

Old Lady Lamb. What is the matter, son ?

Dr. Cant. Nothing, madam ; nothing.—But you were witness how the worthy colonel treated me this morning—Not that I speak it on my own account—for to be reviled is my portion.

Sir J. Lamb. O the villain ! the villain !

Dr. Cant. Indeed, I did not think he had so hard a nature.

Old Lady Lamb. Ah, your charitable heart knows not the rancour that is in his.—His wicked sister, too, has been here this moment abusing this good man.

Dr. Cant. O sir, 'tis plain, 'tis plain ; your whole family are in a combination against me—your son and daughter hate me ; they think I stand between them and your favour ; and indeed it is not fit I should do so ;

for, fallen as they are, they are still your children, and I an alien, an intruder, who ought in conscience to retire and heal those unhappy breaches.

Old Lady Lamb. See, if the good man does not wipe his eyes!

Dr. Cant. Oh, heavens! the thought of their ingratitude wounds me to the quick—but I'll remove this eye-sore—here, Charles!

Enter SEYWARD, L.H.

Sir J. Lamb. For goodness sake—

Dr. Cant. Bring me that writing I gave you to lay up this morning.

Sir J. Lamb. Make haste, good Charles; it shall be signed this moment. [*Exit Seyward, L.H.*]

Dr. Cant. Not for the world, Sir John—every minute tends to corroborate my last intentions—I must not, will not take it, with the curses of your children.

Sir J. Lamb. But, consider, doctor—shall my wicked son then be heir to my lands, before repentance has entitled him to favour—No, let him depend upon you, whom he has wronged; perhaps, in time he may reflect on his father's justice, and be reconciled to your rewarded virtues.—If heaven should at last reclaim him, in you, I know, he still would find a fond forgiving father.

Dr. Cant. The imagination of so blest an hour, softens me to a tenderness I cannot support!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh! the dear good man.

Sir J. Lamb. With regard to my daughter, doctor, you know she is not wronged by it; because, if she proves not obstinate, she may still be happy.

Old Lady Lamb. Yes, but the perverse wretch slights the blessing you propose for her.

Dr. Cant. We must allow, madam, female modesty a time, which often takes the likeness of distaste: the commands of your good son might too suddenly surprise her. Maids must be gently dealt with—and, might I humbly advise—

Sir J. Lamb. Any thing you will; you shall govern me and her.

Dr. Cant. 'Then, sir, abate of your authority, and let the matter rest awhile.

Sir J. Lamb. Suppose we were to get my wife to speak to her; women will often hear from their own sex what, sometimes, even from the man they like, will startle them.

Dr. Cant. Then, with your permission, sir, I will take an opportunity of talking to my lady.

Sir J. Lamb. She's now in her dressing-room; I'll go and prepare her for it. [Exit, R.H.]

Dr. Cant. You are too good to me, sir—too bountiful.

Enter SEYWARD, L.H.

Seyw. Sir, Mr. Mawworm is without, and would be glad to be permitted to speak with you.

Old Lady Lamb. Oh, pray, doctor admit him; I have not seen Mr. Mawworm this great while; he's a pious man, tho' in an humble estate; desire the worthy creature to walk in.

Enter MAWORM, L.H.

—How do you do, Mr. Mawworm?

Maw. Thank your ladyship's axing,—I'm but deadly poorish, indeed; the world and I can't agree—I have got the books, doctor—and Mrs. Grunt bid me give her service to you, and thanks you for the eighteen pence.

Dr. Cant. Hush—(Crosses to L.H.)—friend Mawworm! not a word more; you know I hate to have my little charities blazed about: a poor widow, madam, to whom I sent my mite.

Old Lady Lamb. Give her this.

(Offers a purse to Mawworm.)

Dr. Cant. I'll take care it shall be given to her.

(Puts it up and crosses to R.H.)

Old Lady Lamb. But what is the matter with you, Mr. Mawworm?

Maw. I don't know what's the matter with me—I'm a breaking my heart—I think it's a sin to keep a shop.

Old Lady Lamb. Why, if you think it a sin, indeed—pray what's your business?

Maw. We deals in grocery, tea, small-beer, charcoals, butter, brick-dust, and the like.

Old Lady Lamb. Well; you must consult with your friendly director here.

Maw. (*Crosses to doctor.*) I wants to go a preaching.

Old Lady Lamb. Do you?

Maw. I'm almost sure I have had a call.

Old Lady Lamb. Ay!

Maw. I have made several sermons already. I does them extrumperry, because I can't write; and now the devils in our alley says, as how my head's turned.

Old Lady Lamb. Ay, devils indeed—but don't you mind them.

Maw. No, I don't—I rebukes them, and preaches to them, whether they will or not. We lets our house in lodgings to single men, and, sometimes, I gets them together, with one or two of the neighbours, and makes them all cry.

Old Lady Lamb. Did you ever preach in public?

Maw. I got up on Kennington Common, the last review day; but the boys threw brick-bats at me, and pinned crackers to my tail; and I have been afraid to mount, your ladyship, ever since.

Old Lady Lamb. Do you hear this, doctor! throw brick-bats at him, and pin crackers to his tail! can these things be stood by?

Maw. I told them so—says I, I does nothing clandestently; I stand here contagious to his majesties guards, and I charges you upon your apparels, not to mislist me.

Old Lady Lamb. And it had no effect?

Maw. No more than if I spoke to so many postesses; but if he advises me to go a preaching, and quit my shop, I'll make an excressance farther into the country.

Old Lady Lamb. An excursion, you would say.

Maw. I am but a sheep, but my bleatings shall be heard afar off, and that sheep shall become a shepherd: nay, if it be only, as it were, a shepherd's dog, to bark the stray lambs into the fold.

Old Lady Lamb. He wants method, doctor.

Dr. Cant. Yes, madam, but there is matter; and I despise not the ignorant.

Maw. He's a saint.

Dr. Cant. Oh!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh!

Maw. If ever there was a saint he's one—till I went after him I was little better than the devil; my conscience was tanned with sin, like a piece of neat's leather, and had no more feeling than the sole of my shoe; always a roving after fantastical delights: I used to go, every Sunday evening, to the Three Hats at Islington; it's a public house; mayhap your ladyship may know it: I was a great lover of skittles too, but now I can't bear them.

Old Lady Lamb. What a blessed reformation!

Maw. I believe, doctor, you never know'd as how I was instigated one of the stewards of the reforming society. I convicted a man of five oaths, as last Thursday was a se'night, at the Pewter-platter, in the Borough; and another of three, while he was playing trap-ball in St. George's Fields: I bought this waistcoat out of my share of the money.

Old Lady Lamb. But how do you mind your business?

Maw. We have lost almost all our customers; because I keeps extorting them whenever they come into the shop.

Old Lady Lamb. And how do you live?

Maw. Better than ever we did: while we were worldly minded, my wife and I (for I am married to as likely a woman as you shall see in a thousand) could hardly make things do at all; but since this good man has brought us into the road of the righteous, we have always plenty of every thing; and my wife goes as well dressed as a gentlewoman—we have had a child too.

Old Lady Lamb. Merciful!

Maw. And between *you* and *me*, doctor, I believe Susy's breeding again.

Dr. Cant. Thus it is, madam; I am constantly told,

though I can hardly believe it, a blessing follows wherever I come.

Maw. And yet, if you would hear how the neighbours reviles my wife; saying, as how she sets no store by me, because we have words now and then; but, as I says, if such was the case, would she ever have cut me down that there time as I was melancholy, and she found me hanging behind the door; I don't believe there's a wife in the parish would have done so by her husband.

Dr. Cant. I believe 'tis near dinner time; and Sir John will require my attendance.

Maw. Oh! I am troublesome—nay, I only come to you, doctor, with a message from Mrs. Grunt. I wish your ladyship heartily and heartily farewell; doctor, a good day to you.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Old Lady Lamb. Mr. Mawworm, call on me some time this afternoon; I want to have a little private discourse with you; and pray, my service to your spouse.

Maw. I will, madam; you are a malefactor to all goodness; I'll wait upon your ladyship; I will, indeed. —(*Going, returns.*)—Oh, doctor, that's true; Susy desired me to give her kind love and respects to you.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Dr. Cant. Madam, if you please, I will lead you into the parlour.

Old Lady Lamb. No, doctor, my coach waits at the door.

Enter SKYWARD, L.H.

Dr. Cant. Charles, you may lay those payers by again, but in some place where you'll easily find them; for I believe we shall have occasion for them some time this afternoon.

Skyw. I'll take care, sir.

[*Exeunt Doctor and Old Lady Lamb, L.H.*]
—Occasion for them this afternoon!—Then there's no time to be lost; the coast is clear, and this is her chamber.—What's the matter with me? The thought

of speaking to her throws me into a disorder. There's nobody within, I believe—I'll knock again.

Enter BETTY, R.H.D.

Is your lady busy?

Betty. I believe she's only reading, sir.

Seyw. Will you do me the favour to let her know, if she's at leisure, I beg to speak with her upon some earnest business.

Enter CHARLOTTE, R.H.D.

Charl. Who's that?

Betty. She's here.—Mr. Seyward, madam, desires to speak with you.

Charl. Oh, your servant, Mr. Seyward.—Here, take this odious Homer, and lay him up again; he tires me. —[*Crosses, and Exit Betty, R.H.*]—How could the blind wretch make such a horrid fuss about a fine woman, for so many volumes together, and give us no account of her amours? You have read him, I suppose, in the Greek, Mr. Seyward?

Seyw. Not lately, madam.

Charl. But do you so violently admire him now?

Seyw. The critics say he has his beauties, madam; but Ovid has been always my favourite.

Charl. Ovid—Oh, he is ravishing!

Seyw. So art thou, to madness! (*Aside.*)

Charl. Lord! how could one do to learn Greek?—Were you a great while about it?

Seyw. It has been half the business of my life, madam.

Charl. That's cruel now; then you think one could not be mistress of it in a month or two?

Seyw. Not easily, madam.

Charl. They tell me it has the softest tone for love of any language in the world—I fancy I could soon learn it.—I know two words of it already.

Seyw. Pray, madam, what are they?

Charl. Stay—let me see—Oh—ay—Zoc kai psuche.

Seyw. I hope you know the English of them, madam?

Charl. Oh lud! I hope there is no harm in it.—I'm sure I heard the doctor say it to my lady—pray, what is it?

Seyw. You must first imagine, madam, a tender lover gazing on his mistress; and then, indeed, they have a softness in them; as thus—*Zoe kai psuche!*—my life! my soul!—

Charl. Oh the impudent young rogue! how his eyes spoke too!—What the deuce can he want with me? It always ran in my head that this fellow had something in him above his condition; I'll know immediately—Well, but your business with me, Mr. Seyward? You have something of love in your head, I'll lay my life on't.

Seyw. I never yet durst own it, madam.

Charl. Why, what's the matter?

Seyw. My story is too melancholy to entertain a mind so much at ease as yours.

Charl. Oh, I love melancholy stories of all things:—pray, how long have you lived with your uncle, Mr. Seyward?

Seyw. With doctor Cantwell, I suppose you mean, madam?

Charl. Ay.

Seyw. He's no uncle of mine, madam.

Charl. You surprise me! not your uncle?

Seyw. No, madam: but that's not the only character the doctor assumes, to which he has no right.

Charl. Lord! I am concerned for you.

Seyw. So you would, madam, if you knew all.

Charl. I am already; but if there are any farther particulars of your story, pray let me hear them; and should any services be in my power, I am sure you may command them.

Seyw. You treat me with so kind, so gentle a hand, that I will unbosom myself to you—My father, madam was the younger branch of a genteel family in the north; his name, Trueman—but dying while I was

yet in my infancy, I was left wholly dependant on my mother : a woman really pious and well-meaning, but —In short, madam, doctor Cantwell fatally got acquainted with her, and as he is now your father's bosom counsellor, soon became her's. She died, madam, when I was but eight years old; and then I was, indeed, left an orphan.

Charl. Poor creature!—Lord! I cannot bear it!

Seyw. She left doctor Cantwell her sole heir and executor: but I must do her the justice to say, I believe it was in the confirmation that he would take care of, and do justice to me, and, indeed, he has so far taken care of me, that he sent me to a seminary abroad, and for these three years last past has kept me with him.

Charl. A seminary! Oh! heavens! but why have you not strove to do yourself justice?

Seyw. Thrown so young into his power, as I was—unknown and friendless, to whom could I apply for succour? Nay, madam, I will confess, that on my return to England I was at first tainted with his enthusiastic notions myself; and, for some time, as much imposed upon by him, as others; till, by degrees, as he found it necessary to make use of, or totally discard me (which last he did not think prudent to do) he was obliged to unveil himself to me in his proper colours—and I believe, I can inform you of some parts of his private character. that may be the means of detecting one of the wickedest impostors that ever practised upon credulity.

Charl. But how has the wretch dared to treat you?

Seyw. In his ill and insolent humours, madam, he has sometimes the presumption to tell me. that I am the object of his charity; and I own, madam, that I am humbled in my opinion, by his having drawn me into a connivance at some actions, which I can't look back on without horror!

Charl. Indeed, you can't tell how I pity you; and depend upon it, if it be possible to serve you, by getting you out of the hands of this monster, I will.

Seyw. Once more, madam, let me assure you, that your generous inclination would be a consolation to me in the worst misfortunes; and, even in the last moment of painful death, would give my heart a joy.

Charl. Lord! the poor unfortunate boy loves me, too—what shall I do with him?—Pray, Mr. Seyward, what paper is that you have in your hand?—Is it relative to—

Seyw. Another instance of the conscience and gratitude which animates our worthy doctor.

Charl. You frighten me! pray what is the purport of it? Is it neither signed nor sealed—

Seyw. No, madam; therefore to prevent it, by this timely notice, was my business here with you; your father gave it to the doctor first, to show his counsel; who having approved it; I understand this evening it will be executed.

Charl. But what is it?

Seyw. It grants to doctor Cantwell, in present, four hundred pounds per annum, of which this very house is part; and, at your father's death, invests him in the whole remainder of his freehold estate.—For you, indeed, there is a charge of four thousand pounds upon it, provided you marry with the doctor's consent; if not, 'tis added to my lady's jointure—But your brother, madam, is, without conditions, utterly disinherited.

Charl. I am confounded!—What will become of us! My father now, I find, was serious—Oh, this insinuating hypocrite!—let me see—ay—I will go this minute. Sir, dare you trust this in my hands for an hour only?

Seyw. Any thing to serve you. (*Bell rings.*)

Charl. Hark! they ring to dinner: pray, sir, step in: say I am obliged to dine abroad; and whisper one of the footmen to get a chair immediately; then do you take a proper occasion to slip out after me to Mr. Double's chambers in the Temple; there I shall have time to talk further with you.

[*Exeunt Charlotte, L.H. Seyward, R.H.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Dressing-room, with tables and chairs.*

Enter CHARLOTTE and BETTY, taking off her cloak, &c. L.H.

Charl. Has any one been to speak with me, Betty?

Betty. Only Mr. Darnley, madam: he said, he would call again, and bid his servant stay below, to give him notice when you come home.

Charl. You don't know what he wanted?

Betty. No, madam; he seemed very uneasy at your being abroad.

Charl. Well, go, I'll see him.—[*Exit Betty, L.H.*]
—Ten to one but his wise head has found out something to be jealous of: if he lets me see it, I shall be sure to make him infinitely easy—here he comes.

Enter DARNLEY, L.H.

Darn. Your humble servant, madam.

Charl. Your servant, sir.

Darn. You have been abroad, I hear?

Charl. Yes, and now I am come home, you see.

Darn. You seem to turn upon my words, madam! Is there any thing particular in them?

Charl. As much as there is in my being abroad, I believe.

Darn. Might I not say you have been abroad, without giving offence?

Charl. And might I not as well say, I was come home, without your being so grave upon it.

Darn. Do you know any thing that should make me grave?

Charl. I know if you are so, I am the worst person in the world you can possibly show it to.

Darn. Nay, I don't suppose you do any thing you won't justify.

Charl. Oh, then I find I have done something you think I can't justify.

Darn. I don't say that neither: perhaps I am wrong in what I have said; but I have so often used to ask pardon for your being in the wrong, that I am resolved henceforth never to rely on the insolent evidence of my own senses.

Charl. You don't know, now, perhaps, that I think this pretty smart speech of your's is very dull; but, since that's a fault you can't help, I will not take it ill; come now, be as sincere on your side, and tell me seriously—Is not what real business I had abroad the very thing you want to be made easy in?

Darn. If I thought you would make me easy, I would own it.

Charl. Now do we come to the point.—To-morrow morning, then, I give you my word, to let you know it all; till when, there is a necessity for it being a secret; and I insist upon your believing it.

Darn. But pray, madam, what am I to do with private imagination in the mean time? that is not in my power to confine; and sure, you wont be offended, if to avoid the tortures that may give me, I beg you'll trust me with the secret now.

Charl. Don't press me; for positively I will not.

Darn. Will not—cannot had been a kinder term—Is my disquiet of so little moment to you?

Charl. Of none, while your disquiet dares not trust the assurances I have given you. If you expect I should confide in you for life, don't let me see you dare not take my word for a day; and, if you are wise, you'll think so fair a trial a favour. Come, come, there's nothing shows so low a mind, as those grave and insolent jealousies.

Darn. However, madam, mine you wont find so low as you imagine; and since I see your tyranny arises from your mean opinion of me, 'tis time to be myself, and disavow your power; you use it now beyond my bearing; not only impose on me to disbelieve my senses,

but do it with such an imperious air, as if my manly reason were your slave ; and this despicable frame, that follows you, durst show no signs of life but what you vouchsafe to give it. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Charl. You are in the right ; go on—suspect me still—believe the worst you can—'tis all true—I don't justify myself.—Why do you trouble me with your complaints ? if you are master of that manly reason you have boasted, give a manly proof of it ; at once resume your liberty ; despise me ; go off in triumph now, like a king in a tragedy.

Darn. Is this the end of all then ? and are those tender protestations you have made me (for such I thought them) when, with a kind of reluctance, you gave me something more than hope—what all—Oh, Charlotte ! all come to this ?

Charl. Oh, lud ! I am growing silly ; if I hear on, I shall tell him every thing ; 'tis but another struggle and I shall conquer it.—(*Aside.*)—So you are not gone, I see.

Darn. Do you then wish me gone, madam ?

Charl. Your manly reason will direct you

Darn. This is too much—my heart can bear no more !—What, am I rooted here ?

Enter SEYWARD, through M.D.

Charl. At last I am relieved.—Well, Mr. Seyward, is it done ?

Seyw. I did not stir from the desk till it was entirely finished.

Charl. Where's the original ?

Seyw. This is it, madam.

Charl. Very well ; that, you know, you must keep ; but come, we must lose no time ; we will examine this in the next room—now I feel for him—[*Exit thro' M.D.*]

Darn. This is not to be borne—Pray, Mr. Charles, what private business have you with that lady ?

Seyw. Sir !

Darn. I must know, young man.

Seyw. Not quite so young, but I can keep a secret, and a lady's too—you'll excuse me, sir!

[*Exit, through M.D.*]

Darn. 'Sdcath! I shall be laughed at by every body—I shall be distracted—this young fellow should repent his pertness, did not this house protect him—this is Charlotte's contrivance to distract me—but—but what?—Oh! I have love enough to bear this, and ten times as much.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT, L.H.

Col. Lamb. What, in raptures!

Darn. Pr'ythee—I am unfit to talk with you.

Col. Lamb. What, is Charlotte in her airs again?

Darn. I know not what she is. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Col. Lamb. Do you know where she is?

Darn. Retired this moment to her chamber with the young fellow there—the doctor's nephew.

Col. Lamb. Why, you are not jealous of the doctor, I hope?

Darn. Perhaps she'll be less reserved to you, and tell you wherein I have mistaken her.

Col. Lamb. Poor Frank! every plot I lay upon my sister's inclination for you, you are sure to ruin by your own conduct.

Darn. I own I have too little temper, and too much real passion, for a modish lover.

Col. Lamb. Come, come! make yourself easy once more; I'll undertake for you: if you'll fetch a cool turn in the Park, upon Constitution Hill, in less than half an hour I'll come to you, and make you perfectly easy.

Darn. Dear Tom, you are a friend indeed!—I have a thousand things—but you shall find me there.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Enter CHARLOTTE and SEYWARD, through M.D.

Col. Lamb. How now, sister, what have you done

to Darnley? the poor fellow looks as if he had killed your parrot.

Charl. Psha! you know him well enough; I've only been setting him a love lesson; it a little puzzles him to get through it at first, but he'll know it all by to-morrow—you will be sure to be in the way, Mr. Seyward.

Seyw. Madam, you may depend upon me; I have my full instructions. [*Crosses and Exit, L.H.*]

Col. Lamb. O ho! here's the business then; and it seems Darnley was not to be trusted with it; ha! ha!—and pry'thee, what is the mighty secret that is transacted between Seyward and you?

Charl. That's what he would have known, indeed; but you must know, I don't think it proper to let you tell him either, for all your sly manner of asking.

Col. Lamb. Pray take your own time, dear madam; I am not in haste to know, I assure you.

Charl. Well, but hold; on second thoughts, you shall know part of this affair between Seyward and me; nay, I give you leave to tell Darnley too, on some conditions; 'tis true, I did design to have surprised you—but now my mind's altered, that's enough.

Col. Lamb. Ay, for any mortal's satisfaction—but here comes my lady.

Enter LADY LAMBERT, L.H.D.

Lady Lamb. Away, away, colonel and Charlotte, both of you away this instant.

Charl. What's the matter, madam?

Lady Lamb. I am going to put the doctor to his trial, that's all. I have considered the proposal you have made me to-day, colonel, and am convinced it ought not to be delayed an instant: so just now, I told the doctor in a half-whisper, that I should be glad to have a word in private with him here; and he said he would wait upon me presently; but must I play a traitorous part now, and instead of persuading you to the doctor, persuade the doctor against you?

Charl. Dear madam, why not ? one moment's truce with the prude, I beg of you ; don't startle at his first declaration, but let him go on, till he shows the very bottom of his ugly heart.

Lady Lamb. I warrant you, I'll give a good account of him—but, as I live, here he comes !

Charl. Come then, brother, you and I will be comode, and steal off. [*Exeunt Charl. and Col. R.H.U.E.*]

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL, L.H.D. The Col. listening.

Dr. Cant. Here I am, madam, at your ladyship's command ; how happy am I that you think me worthy—

Lady Lamb. Please to sit, sir. (*They sit.*)

Dr. Cant. Well, but, dear lady, ha ! You can't conceive the joyousness I feel at this so much desired interview. Ah ! ah ! I have a thousand friendly things to say to you ; and how stands your precious health ? is your naughty cold abated yet ? I have scarce closed my eyes these two nights with my concern for you

Lady Lamb. Your charity is too far concerned for me.

Dr. Cant. Ah ! don't say so : don't say so : you merit more than mortal man can do for you.

Lady Lamb. Indeed you over-rate me.

Dr. Cant. I speak it from my heart : indeed, indeed, indeed I do. (*Pressing her hand.*)

Lady Lamb. O dear ! you hurt my hand, sir.

Dr. Cant. Impute it to my zeal, and want of words for expression : precious soul ! I would not harm you for the world ; no, it would be the whole business of my life—

Lady Lamb. But to the affair I would speak to you about.

Dr. Cant. Ah ! thou heavenly woman ?

(*Placing his hand on her knee.*)

Lady Lamb. Your hand need not be there, sir.

Dr. Cant. I was admiring the softness of this silk. They are indeed come to prodigious perfection in all manufactures : how wonderful is human art ! Here it

disputes the prize with nature : that all this soft and gaudy lustre should be brought from the labours of a poor worm !

Lady Lamb. But our business, sir, is upon another subject : Sir John informs me, that he thinks himself under no obligations to Mr. Darnley, and therefore resolves to give his daughter to you.

Dr. Cant. Such a thing has been mentioned, madam ; but, to deal sincerely with you, that is not the happiness I sigh after ; there is a soft and serious excellence for me, very different from what your step-daughter possesses.

Lady Lamb. Well, sir, pray be sincere, and open your heart to me.

Dr. Cant. Open my heart ! Can you then, sweet lady, be yet a stranger to it ? Has no action of my life been able to inform you of my real thoughts ?

Lady Lamb. Well, sir ? I take all this, as I suppose you intend it, for my good and spiritual welfare.

Dr. Cant. Indeed I mean you cordial service.

Lady Lamb. I dare say you do : you are above the low momentary views of this world.

Dr. Cant. Why, I should be so ; and yet, alas ! I find this mortal clothing of my soul is made like other men's, of sensual flesh and blood, and has its frailties.

Lady Lamb. We all have those, but yours are well corrected by your divine and virtuous contemplations.

Dr. Cant. Alas ! madam, my heart is not of stone : I may resist, call all my prayers, my fastings, tears, and penance to my aid ; but yet, I am not an angel ; I am still but a man ; and virtue may strive, but nature will be uppermost. I love you, then, madam.

Lady Lamb. (*They rise.*) Hold, sir ?—suppose I now should let my husband, your benefactor, know the favour you design him.

Dr. Cant. You cannot be so cruel !

Lady Lamb. Nor will, on this condition : that you instantly renounce all claim and title to Charlotte, and use your utmost interest with Sir John, to give her, with her full fortune, to Mr. Darnley.

COLONEL LAMBERT *advances between them.*

Col. Lamb. Villain ! monster ! perfidious and ungrateful traitor ! Your hypocrisy, your false zeal is discovered ; and I am sent here by the hand of insulted heaven, to lay you open to my father, and expose you to the world.

Dr. Cant. Ha !

Lady Lamb. O unthinking colonel !

Col. Lamb. Well, sir, what have you to say for yourself.

Dr. Cant. I have nothing to say to you, colonel, nor for you—but you shall have my prayers.

Col. Lamb. Why, you profligate hypocrite ! do you think to carry off your villainy with that sanctified air ?

Dr. Cant. I know not what you mean, sir ; I have been in discourse here with my good lady, by permission of your worthy father.

Col. Lamb. Dog ! did my father desire you to talk of love to my lady ?

Dr. Cant. Call me not dog, colonel : I hope we are both brother christians.—Yes. I will own I did beg leave to talk to her of love ; for alas ! I am but a man ? yet if my passion for your dear sister, which I cannot controul, be sinful—

Lady Lamb. Your noise, I perceive, is bringing up Sir John ; manage with him as you will at present : I will withdraw, for I have an after-game to play, which may yet put this wretch effectually into our power.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT, L.H.

Sir J. Lamb. What uproar is this ?

Col. Lamb. Nothing, sir ; nothing ; only a little broil of the good doctor's here.—You are well rewarded for your kindnesses ; and he would fain pay it back with triple interest to your wife : in short, sir, I took him here in the very fact of making a criminal declaration of love to my lady.

Dr. Cant. Why, why, sir John, would you not let me leave your house? I knew some dreadful method would be taken to drive me hence—O, be not angry, good colonel: but indeed, and indeed, you use me cruelly.

Sir J. Lamb. Horrible, wicked creature!—Doctor, let me hear it from you.

Dr. Cant. Alas, sir! I am in the dark as much as you; but it should seem, for what purpose he best knows, your son hid himself somewhere hereabouts; and while I was talking to my lady, rushed in upon us—you know the subject, sir, on which I was to entertain her; and I might speak of my love to your daughter, with more warmth than perhaps I ought; which the colonel overhearing might possibly imagine I was addressing my lady herself; for I will not suspect, no; heaven forbid; I will not suspect that he would intentionally forge a falsehood to dishonour me.

Sir J. Lamb. Now, vile detractor of all virtue! is your outrageous malice confounded—what he tells you is true; he has been talking to my lady by my consent; and what he said, he said by my orders—good man, be not concerned; for I see through their vile design—Here, thou curse of my life, if thou art not lost to conscience, and all sense of honour, repair the injury you have attempted, by confessing your rancour and throwing yourself at his feet.

Dr. Cant. Oh, sir John! for my sake—I will throw myself at the colonel's feet; may it please him, he shall tread on my neck.

Sir J. Lamb. What, mute, defenceless, hardened in thy malice?

Col. Lamb. I scorn the imputation, sir; and with the same repeated honesty avow (however cunningly he may have devised this gloss) that you are deceived—what I tell you, sir, is true—these eyes, these ears, were witnesses of his audacious love, without the mention of my sister's name; directly, plainly, grossly tending to abuse the honour of your bed.

Sir J. Lamb. Villain! this instant leave my sight, my house, my family, for ever.

Dr. Cant. Hold, good sir John: I am now recovered from my surprise; let me then be an humble mediator—on my account, this must not be—; I grant it possible, your son loves me not; but you must grant it too as possible, he might mistake me; to accuse me then, was but the error of his virtue; you ought to love him, and thank him for his watchful care.

Sir J. Lamb. Hear this, perverse and reprobate! Oh! couldst thou wrong such more than mortal virtue?

Col. Lamb. Wrong him?—the hardened impudence of this painted charity—

Sir J. Lamb. Peace, graceless infidel!

Col. Lamb. No, sir; though I would hazard life to gain you from the clutches of that wretch; I could die to reconcile my duty to your favour; yet on the terms his villany offers, it is merit to refuse it—but, sir, I'll trouble you no more; to-day is his, to-morrow may be mine. [Exit, R.H.]

Sir J. Lamb. Come, my friend; we'll go this instant, and sign the settlement—for that wretch ought to be punished, who, I now see, is incorrigible, and given over to perdition.

Dr. Cant. And do you think I take your estate with such views?—no, sir—I receive it, that I may have an opportunity to rouse his mind to virtue, by showing him an instance of the forgiveness of injuries; the return of good for evil!—

Sir J. Lamb. O, my dear friend! my stay and my guide! I am impatient till the affair is concluded.

Dr. Cant. The will of heaven be done in all things.

Sir J. Lamb. Poor dear man! [Exeunt, L.H.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Parlour in Sir John Lambert's house.**Enter CHARLOTTE and SEYWARD, L.H.**Charl.* You were a witness, then ?*Seyw.* I saw it signed, sealed, and delivered, madam.*Charl.* And all passed without the least suspicion ?*Seyw.* Sir John signed it with such earnestness, and the doctor received it with such a seeming reluctance, that neither had the curiosity to examine a line of it.*Charl.* Well, Mr. Seyward, whether it succeeds to our ends or not, we have still the same obligation to you. You saw with what friendly warmth my brother heard your story : and I don't in the least doubt his being able to do something for you.*Seyw.* What I have done, my duty bound me to ; but pray, madam, give me leave, without offence, to ask you one innocent question.*Charl.* Freely.*Seyw.* Have you never suspected, that in all this affair, I have had some secret, stronger motives than barely duty ?*Charl.* Yes.—But have you been in no apprehensions I should discover that motive ?*Seyw.* Pray, pardon me ; I see already I have gone too far.*Charl.* Not at all ; it loses you no merit with me ; nor is it in my nature to use any one ill that loves me, unless I loved that one again : then, indeed, there might be danger. Come don't look grave ; my inclinations to another shall not hinder me paying every one what's due to their merit : I shall, therefore, always think myself obliged to treat your misfortunes and your modesty with the utmost tenderness.*Seyw.* Your good opinion is all I aim at.*Charl.* Ay ; but the more I give it you, the better you'll think of me still ; and then I must think the better

of you again; and then you the better of me, upon that too; and so at last I shall think seriously, and you'll begin to think ill of me. But I hope Mr. Seyward, your good sense will prevent all this.

Seyw. I see my folly madam, and blush at my presumption. Madam, I humbly take my leave.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Charl. Well, he's a pretty young fellow after all, and the very first sure that ever heard reason against himself with so good an understanding.—Lord, how one may live and learn!—I could not believe that modesty in a young fellow could have been so amiable. And though I own there is, I know not what, of dear delight in indulging one's vanity with them; yet upon serious reflection, we must confess, that truth and sincerity have a thousand charms beyond it. I believe I had as good confess all this to Darnley, and e'en make up the bustle with him, too; but then he will so tease one for instances of real inclination.—O gad!—I can't bear the thought on't; and yet we must come together too. Well, nature knows the way to be sure, and so I'll e'en trust to her for it.

Enter LADY LAMBERT, L.H.

Lady Lamb. Dear Charlotte, what will become of us?

Charl. Pray explain, madam.

Lady Lamb. In spite of all I could urge, he has consented that the doctor shall this minute come, and be his own advocate with you.

Charl. I'm glad on't; for the beast must come like a bear to the stake. I'm sure he knows I shall bait him.

Lady Lamb. No matter for that; he presses it, to keep sir John still blind to his wicked design upon me.—Therefore I come to give you notice, that you might be prepared to receive him.

Charl. I'm obliged to your ladyship. Our meeting will be a tender scene, no doubt on't.

Lady Lamb. But I think I hear the doctor coming

up stairs. My dear girl, at any rate keep your temper. I shall expect you in my dressing-room, to tell me the particulars of your conduct. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Charl. He must have a great deal of impudence to come in this manner to me.

Enter BETTY, introducing DR. CANTWELL, L.H.

Betty. Dr. Cantwell desires to be admitted, madam.

Charl. Let him come in.—Your servant, sir.—Give us chairs, Betty, and leave the room.—[*Exit Betty, L.H.*]
—Sir, there's a seat.—What can that ugly cur say to me ! he seems a little puzzled.

(*Crosses to L.H. humming a tune.*)

Dr. Cant. (*They sit.*) Look ye, young lady, I am afraid, notwithstanding your good father's favour, I am not the man you would desire to be alone with upon this occasion.

Charl. Your modesty is pleased to be in the right.

Dr. Cant. I'm afraid, too, notwithstanding all my endeavours to the contrary, that you entertain a pretty bad opinion of me.

Charl. A worse sir of no mortal breathing !

Dr. Cant. Which opinion is immovable.

Charl. No rock so firm !

Dr. Cant. I am afraid, then, it will be a vain pursuit, when I solicit you, in compliance with my worthy friend's desire, and my own inclinations, to become my partner in that blessed estate, in which we may be a comfort and support to each other.

Charl. I would die rather than consent to it.

Dr. Cant. In other words you hate me.

Charl. Most transcendently !

Dr. Cant. Well, there is sincerity, at least, in your confession : you are not, I see, totally deprived of all virtue ; though, I must say, I never could perceive in you but very little.

Charl. Oh, fie ! you flatter me !

Dr. Cant. No ; I speak it with sorrow, because you

are the daughter of my best friend. But how are we to proceed now? Are we to preserve temper?

Charl. Oh! never fear me, sir; I shall not fly out; being convinced, that nothing gives so sharp a point to one's aversion, as good breeding; as, on the contrary, ill manners often hide a secret inclination.

Dr. Cant. Well then, young lady, be assured, so far am I from the unchristian disposition of returning injuries, that your antipathy to me causes no hatred in my soul towards you; on the contrary, I would willingly make you happy, if it may be done according to my conscience, with the interest of heaven in view.

Charl. Why, I can't see, sir, how heaven can be any way concerned in a transaction between you and me.

Dr. Cant. When you marry any other person, my consent is necessary.

Charl. So I hear, indeed!—but pray, doctor, how could your modesty receive so insolent a power, without putting my poor father out of countenance with your blushes?

Dr. Cant. I sought it not; but he would crowd it in among other obligations. He is good-natured; and I foresaw it might serve to pious purposes.

Charl. I don't understand you.

Dr. Cant. I take it for granted, that you would marry Mr. Darnley. Am I right?

Charl. Once in your life, perhaps you are.

Dr. Cant. Nay, let us be plain. Would you marry him?

Charl. You're mighty nice, methinks.—Well, I would.

Dr. Cant. Then I will not consent.

Charl. You won't.

Dr. Cant. My conscience will not suffer me. I know you to be both luxurious and worldly-minded; and you would squander upon the vanities of the world, those treasures which ought to be better laid out.

Charl. Hum!—I believe I begin to conceive you.—

Dr. Cant. If you can think of any project to satisfy

my conscience, I am tractable. You know there is a considerable moiety of your fortune which goes to my lady in case of our disagreement.

Charl. That's enough, sir.—You think we should have a fellow-feeling in it. At what sum do you rate your concurrence to my inclinations? that settled, I am willing to strike the bargain.

Dr. Cant. What do you think of half?

Charl. How! two thousand pounds! (*rises.*)

Dr. Cant. Why, you know you gain two thousand pounds; and really the severity of the times for the poor, and my own stinted pittance, which cramps my charities, will not suffer me to require less. (*rises.*)

Charl. But how is my father to be brought into this?

Dr. Cant. Leave that to my management.

Charl. And what security do you expect for the money?

Dr. Cant. Oh! Mr. Darnley is wealthy: when I deliver my consent in writing, he shall lay it down to me in bank bills.

Charl. Pretty good security!—On one proviso though.

Dr. Cant. Name it.

Charl. That you immediately tell my father, that you are willing to give up your interest to Mr. Darnley.

Dr. Cant. Hum!—stay—I agree to it; but in the mean time, let me warn you, child, not to expect to turn that, or what has now passed between us, to my confusion, by sinister construction, or evil representation to your father. I am satisfied of the piety of my own intentions, and care not what the wicked think of them; but force me not to take advantage of sir John's good opinion of me, in order to shield myself from the consequences of your malice.

Charl. Oh! I shall not stand in my own light: I know your conscience and your power too well, dear doctor!

Dr. Cant. Well, let your interest sway you. Thank heaven, I am actuated by more worthy motives.

Charl. No doubt on't.

Dr. Cant. Farewell, and think me your friend.

[*Exit*, L.H.]

Charl. What this fellow's original was, I know not ; but, by his conscience and cunning, he would make an admirable jesuit.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Servant. Madam, Mr. Darnley.

Charl. Desire him to walk in. [*Exit servant*, L.H.]

Enter DARNLEY, L.H.

Darn. To find you thus alone, madam, is an happiness I did not expect, from the temper of our last parting.

Charl. I should have been as well pleased now, to have been thanked, as reproached, for my good-nature ; but you will be in the right, I find.

Darn. Indeed, you take me wrong. I literally meant that I was afraid you would not so soon think I had deserved this favour.

Charl. Well, but were not you silly now ?

Darn. Come, you shall not be serious : you can't be more agreeable.

Charl. Oh ! but I am serious.

Darn. Then I'll be so.—Do you forgive me all ?

Charl. What ?

Darn. Are we friends, Charlotte ?

Charl. O lord ! but you have told me nothing of poor Seyward ?

Darn. Must you needs know that, before you answer me ?

Charl. Lord ! you are never well till you have talked one out of countenance.

Darn. Come, I won't be too particular ; you shall answer nothing.—Give me but your hand only.

Charl. Psha ! I won't pull off my glove, not I.

Darn. I'll take it as it is then.

Charl. Lord ! there, there ; eat it, eat it.

Darn. And so I could, by heaven !

Charl. Oh, my glove ! my glove ! my glove ! you are in a perfect storm ! lord ! if you make such a rout with one's hand only, what would you do if you had one's heart.

Darn. That's impossible to tell. But you were asking me of Seyward, madam ?

Charl. Oh, ay, that's true. Well, now you are very good again.—Come, tell me all the affair, and then you shall see—how I will like you.

Darn. There is not much to tell—only this: we met the Attorney General, to whom he has given a very sensible account of himself, and the doctor's proceedings.—The Attorney General, seems very clear in his opinion, that, as the doctor, at the time of the death of Seyward's mother, was intrusted with her whole affairs, the Court of Equity will oblige him to be accountable.

Charl. If Seyward does not recover his fortune, you must absolutely get him a commission, and bring him into acquaintance.

Darn. Upon my word, I will.

Charl. And show him to all the women of taste; and I'll have you call him my pretty fellow, too.

Darn. I will, indeed !—but hear me—

Charl. You can't conceive how pretty he makes love.

Darn. Not so well as you make your defence, Charlotte.

Charl. Lord ! I had forgot, he is to teach me Greek, too.

Darn. Trifling tyrant ! how long, Charlotte, do you think you can find new evasions for what I say unto you ?

Charl. Lord ! you are horrid silly ; but since 'tis love that makes you such a dunce—poor Darnley ! I forgive you.

The COLONEL enters, behind, R.H. U.E.

Darn. That's kind, however.—But to complete my joy, be kinder yet—and—

Charl. Oh ! I can't ! I can't ! — Lord ! did you never ride a horse-match ?

Darn. Was ever so wild a question !

Charl. Because, if you have, it runs in my head you galloped a mile beyond the winning-post, to make sure on't.

Darn. Now, I understand you. But since you will have me touch every thing so very tenderly, Charlotte, how shall I find proper words to ask you the lover's last necessary question ?

Charl. Oh ! there's a thousand points to be adjusted before that's answered.

Col. Lamb. (*In the centre.*) Name them this moment ; for, positively, this is the last time of asking.

Charl. Psha ! who sent for you ?

Col. Lamb. I only came to teach you to speak plain English, my dear.

Charl. Lord ! mind your own business ; can't you ?

Col. Lamb. So I will ; for I will make you do more of yours in two minutes, than you would have done without me in a twelvemonth. Why, how now !—do you think the man's to dangle after your ridiculous airs for ever ?

Charl. This is mighty pretty !

Col. Lamb. You'll say so on Thursday se'night, (for let affairs take what turn they will in the family) that's positively your wedding-day—(*Charl. attempts to go.*) Nay you shan't stir.

Charl. Was ever such assurance !

Darn. Upon my life, madam, I'm out of countenance ! I don't know how to behave myself.

Charl. No, no ; let him go on only—this is beyond whatever was known, sure !

Col. Lamb. Ha ! ha ! if I was to leave you to yourselves, what a couple of pretty out of countenanced figures you would make ! humming and hawing upon the vulgar points of jointure and pin-money.—Come, come, I know what's proper on both sides ; you shall leave it to me.

Darn. I had rather Charlotte would name her own terms to me.

Col. Lamb. Have you a mind to any thing particular, madam?

Charl. Why, sure! what, do you think I'm only to be filled out as you please, and sweetened and sipped up like a dish of tea?

Col. Lamb. Why, pray, madam, when your tea's ready, what have you to do but to drink it?—but you, I suppose, expect a lover's heart, like your lamp, should be always flaming at your elbow; and when its ready to go out, you indolently supply it with the spirit of contradiction.

Charl. And so you suppose that your assurance has made an end of this matter?

Col. Lamb. Not till you have given him your hand upon it.

Charl. That then would complete it.

Col. Lamb. Perfectly.

Charl. Why, then, take it Darnley.—Now I presume you are in high triumph, sir. (*To the Colonel.*)

Col. Lamb. No, sister; now you are consistent with the good sense I always thought you mistress of.

Charl. And now I beg we may separate; for our being seen together, at this critical juncture, may give that devil, the doctor suspicion of a confederacy, and make him set some engine at work, that we are not aware of.

Col. Lamb. Its a very proper caution. Come along, Darnley: nay, you must leave her now, whatever violence you do yourself.

Charl. Ay, ay, take him with you, brother—or stay, Darnley; if you please, you may come along with me.

[*Exeunt, Col. Lamb, L.H. Charl. and Darn. R.H.D.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT. V.

SCENE I.—*A Parlour in Sir John Lambert's House.*

Enter DARNLEY and CHARLOTTE, R.H.

Charl. But really, will you stand to the agreement though, that I have made with the doctor?

Darn. Why not? you shall not break your word upon my account, though he might be a villain you give it to. Suppose I should talk with sir John myself?—'tis true he has slighted me of late.

Charl. No matter—here he comes—This may open another scene of action to that, I believe, my brother's preparing for.

Enter SIR JOHN, and LADY LAMBERT, L.H.

Sir. J. Lamb. Mr. Darnley, I am glad I have met you here.

Darn. I have endeavoured twice to-day, sir, to pay my respects to you.

Sir J. Lamb. Sir, I'll be plain with you—I went out to avoid you; but where the welfare of a child is concerned, you must not take it ill if we don't stand upon ceremony—However, since I have reason now to be more in temper than perhaps I was at that time, I shall be glad to talk with you.

Darn. I take it as a favour, sir.

Sir. J. Lamb. You must allow, Mr. Darnley, that conscience is the rule which every honest man ought to walk by.

Darn. 'Tis granted, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. Then give me leave to tell you, sir, that giving you my daughter, would be to act against that conscience I pretend to, whilst I thought you an ill

lover ! and consequently the same tie obliges me to bestow her on a better man—

Darn. Well but, sir, to come to the point.—Suppose the doctor (whom I presume you design her for) actually consents to give me up his interest ?

Sir J. Lamb. But why do you suppose, sir, he will give up his interest ?

Darn. I only judge from what your daughter tells me, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. My daughter !

Darn. I appeal to her.

Charl. And I appeal even to yourself, sir—has not the doctor, just now, in the garden, spoke in favour of Mr. Daruley to you ? Nay, pray sir, be plain ; because more depends on that than you can easily imagine or believe.

Sir J. Lamb. What senseless insinuation have you got into your head now ?

Charl. Be so kind, sir, first to answer me, that I may be better able to inform you.

Sir J. Lamb. Well, I own he has declined his interest in favour of Mr. Daruley ; but I must tell you, madam, he did it in so modest, so friendly, so good-natured, so conscientious a manner, that I now think myself more than ever bound in honour to espouse him.

Charl. But now, sir, (only for argument's sake) suppose I could prove that all this seeming virtue was artificial ; that his regard for Mr. Darnley was neither founded upon modesty, friendship, good-nature, nor conscience ; or, in short, that he has, like a villain, bartered, bargained, to give me to Mr. Daruley for half the four thousand pounds you valued his consent at ; I say, sir, suppose this could be proved, where would be his virtue then ?

Sir J. Lamb. It is impious to suppose it.

Charl. Then, sir, from what principle must you suppose that I accuse him ?

Sir J. Lamb. From an obstinate prejudice to all that's good and virtuous.

Charl. That's too hard, sir. But the worst you

opinion can provoke me to, is to marry Mr. Darnley, without either his consent or yours.

Sir J. Lamb. What, do you brave me, madam?

Charl. No, sir; but I scorn a lie; and will so far vindicate my integrity, as to insist on your believing me; if not, as a child you abandon, I have a right to throw myself into other arms for protection.

Darn. Dear Charlotte, how your spirit charms me!

Sir J. Lamb. I am confounded. These tears cannot be counterfeit; nor can this be true.

Lady Lamb. Indeed, my dear, I fear it is. Give me leave to ask you one question. In all our mutual course of happiness, have I ever yet deceived you with a falsehood?

Sir J. Lamb. Never.

Lady Lamb. Would you then believe me, should I accuse him even of crimes which virtue blushes but to mention?

Sir J. Lamb. To what extravagance would you drive me?

Lady Lamb. I would before have undeceived you, when his late artifice turned the honest duty of your son into his own reproach and ruin; but knowing then your temper was inaccessible, I durst not offer it.—But suppose I should be able to let you see his villany, make him repeat his odious love to me in your own hearing; at once throw off the mask, and show the barefaced traitor?

Sir J. Lamb. Is it possible?

Lady Lamb. But then, sir, I must prevail on you to descend to the poor shifts we are reduced to.

Sir J. Lamb. All; to any thing, to ease me of my doubts: make me but witness of this fact, and I shall soon accuse myself, and own my folly equal to his baseness.

Lady Lamb. Behind that screen you may easily conceal yourself.

Sir J. Lamb. Be it so.

Lady Lamb. Mr. Darnley, shall we beg your leave,

and you, Charlotte, take the least suspected way to send the doctor to me directly?

Charl. I have a thought will do it, madam.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, Charlotte! Oh, Mr. Darnley!

Darn. Have but resolution, sir, and fear nothing.

[*Exeunt Darnley and Charlotte, L.H.D.*]

Lady Lamb. Now, sir, you are to consider what a desperate disease I have undertaken to cure; therefore be sure keep close and still; and when the proof is full, appear at your discretion.

Sir J. Lamb. Fear not; I will conform myself—Yet, be not angry, my love, if in a case like this, where I should not believe even him accusing you; be not angry, I say, if I have also charity enough to hope you may yet be deceived in what you charge him with, till the evidence of my own senses assure me to the contrary.

Lady Lamb. 'Tis just.

Sir J. Lamb. Hark! I think I hear him coming.

Lady Lamb. Now, my dear, remember your promise to have patience.

Sir J. Lamb. Rely upon't.

Lady Lamb. To your post then.

(*Sir John goes behind the screen.*)

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL, L.H.D. with a book.

Dr. Cant. Madam, your woman tells me, that being here, and alone, you desired to speak with me.

Lady Lamb. I did, sir—but, that we may be sure that we are alone, pray shut the outward door—another surprise might ruin us—is all safe?

Dr. Cant. (*Fastens L.H.D.*) I have taken care, madam.

Lady Lamb. But I am afraid I interrupt your meditations.

Dr. Cant. No, madam, no; I was only looking over some pious exhortations here, for the use of a society of chosen brethren.

Lady Lamb. Ah, doctor, what have you done to

me? the trouble of my mind since our last unfortunate conference, is not to be expressed. You indeed discovered to me, what, perhaps, for my own peace, 'twere better I had never been acquainted with; but I had not sufficient time to lay my heart open to you.

Dr. Cant. Whither, madam, would you lead me?

Lady Lamb. I have been uneasy, too, not knowing how far you might mistake my behaviour on the last accident that happened; but I was really so shocked, so terrified, I knew not what I was doing: only had I joined in your defence against the colonel, it would have been evident that I was his enemy, and I have uses for his friendship. Silence, therefore, was my only prudent part; and I knew your credit with sir John needed no support.

Dr. Cant. Let me presume then to hope, that what I did, you judge was self-defence, and pure necessity.

Lady Lamb. And perhaps, after all, the accident was lucky; for sir John, in order to obviate any ill constructions that may be put upon it, insists now that we should be more together, to let the world see his confidence in us both. This relieves us from restraint, and I now dare tell you—but no—I won't—

Dr. Cant. But why, madam? let me beseech you—

Lady Lamb. No—besides—what need you ask me—

Dr. Cant. Ah! do not endeavour to decoy my foolish heart, too apt to flatter itself. You cannot, sure, think kindly of me?

Lady Lamb. Well, well; I would have you imagine so

Dr. Cant. Besides, may I not with reason suspect, that this apparent goodness is but artifice, a shadow of compliance, meant only to persuade me from your daughter.

Lady Lamb. Methinks this doubt of me seems rather founded on your settled resolution not to resign her.—I am convinced of it. I can assure you, sir, I should have saved you this trouble, had I known how deeply you were engaged to her. (*Weeps.*)

Dr. Cant. Tears—then I must believe you—but in-

deed you wrong me. To prove my innocence, it is not an hour since I pressed sir John to give Charlotte to young Darnley.

Lady Lamb. Mere artifice. You knew that modest resignation would make sir John warmer in your interest.

Dr. Cant. No, indeed, indeed. I had other motives, which you may hereafter be made acquainted with, and will convince you—

Lady Lamb. Well, sir; now I'll give you reason to guess the reason why, at our last meeting, I pressed you so warmly to resign Charlotte.

Dr. Cant. Ah dear! ah dear!

Lady Lamb. You cannot blame me for having opposed your happiness, when my own, perhaps, depended upon it.

Dr. Cant. Spare me, spare me; you kill me with this kindness.

Lady Lamb. But, now that I have discovered my weakness, be secret;—for the least imprudence—

Dr. Cant. It is a vain fear.

Lady Lamb. Call it not vain: my reputation is dearer to me than life.

Dr. Cant. Where can it find so sure a guard? the grave austerities of my life will dumb-found suspicion, and yours may defy detraction.

Lady Lamb. Well, doctor, 'tis you must answer for my folly.

Dr. Cant. I take it all upon myself.

Lady Lamb. But there's one thing still to be afraid of.

Dr. Cant. Nothing, nothing.

Lady Lamb. My husband, sir John.

Dr. Cant. Alas, poor man! I will answer for him. Between ourselves, madam, your husband is weak; I can lead him by the nose any where.

SIR JOHN LAMBERT *advances to the centre.*

Sir J. Lamb. No, caitiff, I'm to be led no farther.

Dr. Cant. Ah! woman.

Sir J. Lamb. Is this your sanctity? this your doctrine? these your meditations?

Dr. Cant. Is then my brother in a conspiracy against me?

Sir J. Lamb. Your brother! I have been your friend, indeed, to my shame; your dupe; but your spell has lost its hold: no more canting; it will not serve your turn any longer.

Lady Lamb. Now heaven be praised.

Dr. Cant. It seems you want an excuse to part with me.

Sir J. Lamb. Ungrateful wretch! but why do I reproach you? Had I not been the weakest of mankind, you never could have proved so great a villain. Get out of my sight; leave my house: of all my follies, which is it tells you, that if you stay much longer, I shall not be tempted to wrest you out of the hands of law, and punish you as you deserve?

Dr. Cant. Well; but first let me ask you, sir, who it is you menace? consider your own condition, and where you are.

Sir J. Lamb. What would the villain drive at? leave me; I forgive you: but once more I tell you, seek some other place; out of my house. This instant be gone, and see my shameful face no more.

Dr. Cant. Nay, then, 'tis my duty to exert myself, and let you know that I am master here. Turn you out, sir, this house is mine; and now, sir, at your peril, dare to insult me.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, heavens! 'tis true; whither shall I fly to hide me from the world?

Lady Lamb. Whither are you going, sir?

Sir J. Lamb. I know not—but here, it seems, I am a trespasser—the master of the house has warned me hence—and, since the right is now in him, 'tis just I should resign it.

Lady Lamb. You shall not stir. He dares not act with such abandoned insolence. No, sir, possession still is yours. If he pretends a right, let him, by open course of law, maintain it.

Dr. Cant. Ha! Here! Seyward! [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Enter MAWWORM, L.H.D.

Sir J. Lamb. Who is this fellow? what do you want, man?

Maw. (*Going to L.H.D.*) My lady, come up.

Enter OLD LADY LAMBERT, L.H.D.

Old Lady Lamb. How now!

Maw. He wants to know who I be.

Old Lady Lamb. The gentleman is a friend of mine, son. I was carrying him in a coach to attend a controversy that's to be held this evening, at the reverend Mr. Scruple's, about an affair of simony, and called to take up the doctor. But what strange tales are these I hear below?

Sir J. Lamb. The doctor is a villain, madam: I have detected him; detected him in the horrible design of seducing my wife.

Maw. It's impossible.

Sir J. Lamb. What do you say, man?

Maw. I say it's impossible. He has been locked up with my wife for hours together, morning, noon, and night, and I never found her the worse for him.

Old Lady Lamb. Ah, son! son!

Sir J. Lamb. What is you ladyship going to say now?

Old Lady Lamb. The doctor is not in fault.

Sir J. Lamb. 'Blife, madam!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh, he swears! he swears! Years in growing good, we become profligate in a moment. If you swear again, I won't stay in the house.

Maw. Nor I neither: aren't you ashamed of yourself? have you no commensuration on your soul?—Ah! poor wicked sinner! I pity you.

Sir J. Lamb. 'Sdeath! and the devil!

Maw. If you swear any more, I'll inform against you.

Sir J. Lamb. Why would you bring this idiot, madam?

Maw. Ay, do despise me, I'm the prouder for it; I likes to be despised. (*Retires up the stage.*)

Enter CHARLOITE, I.H.D.

Charl. Oh, dear papa, I shall faint away; there's murder doing.

Sir J. Lamb. Who! where! what is it?

Charl. The doctor, sir, and Seyward, were at high words just now in the garden; and, upon a sudden, there was a pistol fired between them. Oh! I'm afraid poor Seyward is killed.

Sir J. Lamb. How?

Charl. Oh, here he comes himself; he'll tell you more.

[*Enter DR. CANTWELL, DARNLEY, SEYWARD, and SERVANTS, I.H.D.*

Darn. (*Speaking as he enters.*) Here, bring in this ruffian; this is villany beyond example.

Sir J. Lamb. What means this outrage?

Lady Lamb. I tremble.

Seyw. (*In the centre.*) Don't be alarmed, madam—there is no mischief done; what was intended, the doctor here can best inform you.

Sir J. Lamb. (R.H.) Mr. Darnley, I am ashamed to see you.

Maw. (*Advancing to the centre.*) So you ought; but this good man is ashamed of nothing. (*Retires up the stage.*)

Dr. Cant. Alas! my enemies prevail.

Seyw. In short, gentlemen, the affair is circumstantially this—The doctor called me out into the pavilion in the garden; appeared in great disorder; told me there was a sudden storm raised, which he was not sufficiently prepared to weather. He said, his dependence was upon me; and, at all events, I must be ready to swear, when he called upon me, I had seen him pay sir John several large sums of money. He talked confusedly about giving value for an estate; but I boldly refused to perjure myself; and told him, on the contrary, I was satisfied he had fleeced sir John of se-

veral large sums, under pretence of charitable uses, which he secretly converted to his own.—This stung him—and he fastened at my throat. Then, indeed, all temper left me; and, disengaging myself from his hold, with a home-blow, I struck him down. At this, grown desperate, he ran with fury to some pistols that hung above the chimney; but in the instant he reached one, I seized upon his wrist; and as we grappled, the pistol firing to the ceiling, alarmed the family.

Old Lady Lamb. This is a lie young man, I see the devil standing at your elbow.

Maw. (In centre.) So do I, with a great big pitchfork, pushing him on.

Dr. Cant. Well, what have you more against me?

Darn. More, sir, I hope is needless—but, if sir John is yet unsatisfied—

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! I have seen too much.

Dr. Cant. I demand my liberty.

Sir J. Lamb. Let him go.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT and Attendants, L.H.D.

Col. Lamb. Hold, sir! not so fast; you can't pass.

Dr. Cant. Who, sir, shall dare to stop me?

Col. Lamb. Within there.

Enter TIPSTAFF, L.H.D.

Tipstaff. Is your name Cantwell, sir?

Dr. Cant. What if it be, sir?

Tipstaff. Then, sir, I have my Lord Chief Justice's warrant against you.

Dr. Cant. Against me?

Tipstaff. Yes, sir, for a cheat, and impostor.

Old Lady Lamb. What does he say?

Sir J. Lamb. Dear son what is this?

Col. Lamb. Only some actions of the doctor's, sir, which I have affidavits in my hand here to prove, from more than one creditable witness; and I think it my duty to make the public acquainted with them: if he can acquit himself of them, so; if not, he must take the consequence.

Dr. Cant. Well, but stay ; let the accusations against me be what they will, by virtue of this conveyance, I am still master here ; and, if I am forced to leave the house myself, I will shut up the doors—nobody shall remain behind.

Sir J. Lamb. There ! there ! indeed he stings me to the heart ! for that rash act, reproach and endless shame will haunt me !

Charl. No, sir !—be comforted.—Even there, too, his wicked hopes must leave him ; for know, the fatal deed, which you intended to sign, is here, even yet unsealed and innocent !

Sir J. Lamb. What mean you ?

Charl. I mean, sir, that this deed, by accident falling into this gentleman's hands, his generous concern for our family discovered it to me ; and that, in concert, we procured that other to be drawn exactly like it ; which, in your impatience to execute, passed unsuspected for the original. Their only difference is, that wherever here you read the doctor's name, there you'll find my brother's.

Dr. Cant. Come, sir ; lead me where you please.

[*Exit, L.H.D. guarded.*]

Old Lady Lamb. I don't know what to make of all this.

Maw. They'll all go to the devil for what they are doing.—Come away, my lady, and let us see after the good dear doctor. Ay, do laugh, you'll go to the devil for all that.—Come, my lady, you go first.

[*Exeunt Mawworm, and Old Lady Lamb. L.H.D.*]

Charl. Now, Darnley, I hope I have made some atonement for your jealousy.

Darn. You've banished it for ever ! this was beyond yourself surprising.

Col. Lamb. Sister—

Charl. Come, no set speeches ; if I deserve your thanks, return them in friendship to your first preserver.

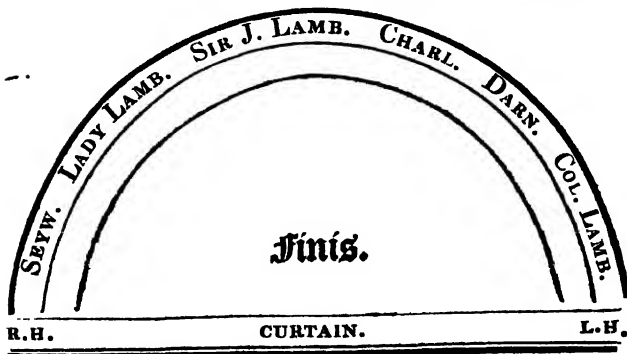
Col. Lamb. The business of my life shall be to merit it.

Seyw. And mine to speak my sense of obligations.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, my child ! for my deliverance, I can only reward you here.—For you, my son, whose filial virtue I have injured, this honest deed shall in every article be ratified.—And, for the sake of that hypocritical villain, I declare, that from henceforward I renounce all pious folks ; I will have an utter abhorrence for every thing that bears the appearance—

Charl. Nay, now, my dear sir, I must take the liberty to tell you, you carry things too far, and go from one extreme to another.—What ? because a worthless wretch has imposed upon you, under the fallacious show of austere grimace, will you needs have it, every body is like him ? confound the good with the bad, and conclude, there are no truly religious in the world ?—Leave, my dear sir, such rash consequences to fools and libertines.—Let us be careful to distinguish between virtue and the appearance of it. Guard, if possible, against doing honour to hypocrisy.—But, at the same time, let us allow there is no character in life, greater or more valuable than that of the truly devout—nor any thing more noble, or more beautiful, than the fervour of a sincere piety.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



W. Oxberry & Co. Printers,
8, White-Hart-Yard, Drury Lane.



Wagman del. H.R. Cooke sculp.

MRS GLOVER,
AS MRS OAKLY.

Engraved &
published 1818, by Simpkin

Orbigny's New English Drama
Marshall, Stationers' Court, 7 Chancery Lane

Oxberry's Edition.

THE JEALOUS WIFE,

A COMEDY;

By George Colman.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN, AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE STREET,
AND C. CHAPPLE, 59, FALL-MALL.

1822.

Printed by the Press of W. Oxberry,
White-Hart Yard.

Remarks.

THE JEALOUS WIFE.

COTMAN, the elder, was the translator of Terence: and the comedy of the "Jealous Wife" is a classical play. The plot is regular; the characters well supported; and the moral the best in the world. The dialogue has more sense than wit. The ludicrous arises from the skilful development of the characters, and the absurdities they commit in their own persons, rather than from the smart reflections which are made upon them by others. Thus nothing can be more ridiculous or more instructive than the scenes of which *Mrs. Oakly* is the heroine: yet they are all serious and unconscious: she exposes herself to our contempt and ridicule by the part she acts, by the airs she gives herself, and her fantastic behaviour in the situations in which she is placed. In other words, the character is pure comedy, not satire. Congreve's comedies for the most part are satires, in which, from an exuberance of wit, the different speakers play off their sharp pointed raillery on one another's foibles, real or supposed. The best and most genuine kind of comedy, because the most dramatic, is that of character or humour, in which the persons introduced upon the stage are left to betray their own folly by their words and actions. The progressive winding up of the story of the present comedy is excellently managed. The jealousy and hysteric violence of *Mrs Oakly* increase every moment, as the pretext for them becomes more and more frivolous; the attention is kept alive by our doubts about *Oakly's* wavering (but in the end, triumphant) firmness; and the arch insinuations and well-concerted home-thrusts of the *Major* heighten the comic interest of the scene. There is only one circumstance on which this veteran bachelor's freedom of speech might have thrown a little more light, namely, that the married lady's jealousy is in truth only a

pretence for the exercise of her domineering spirit in general ; so that we are left at last in some uncertainty as to the turn which this humour may take, and as to the future repose of her husband, though the affair of *Miss Russet* is satisfactorily cleared up.—The under-plot of the two lovers is very ingeniously fitted in to the principal one, and is not without interest in itself. *Charles Oakley* is a spirited, well-meaning, thoughtless young fellow, and *Harriot Russet* is an amiable, romantic girl, in that very common, but always romantic situation—in love. Her persecution from the addresses of *Lord Trinket* and *Sir Harry Beagle* fans the gentle flame which had been kindled just a year before in her breast ; produces the adventures and cross-purposes of the plot ; and at last reconciles her to, and throws her into the arms of her lover, in spite of her resentment for his misconduct and apparent want of delicacy. The figure which *Lord Trinket* and *Lady Free love* make in the piece is as odious and contemptible as it is possible for people in that class of life (and for no others) to make.

The insolence, the meanness, the affectation, the hollowness, the utter want of humanity, sincerity, principle, and delicacy, are such as can only be found where artificial rank and station in society supersede not merely a regard to propriety of conduct, but the necessity even of an attention to appearances. The morality of the stage has (we are ready to hope) told in that direction as well as others, has in some measure suppressed the suffocating pretensions and flaunting affectation of vice and folly in “persons of honour,” and as it were humanised rank and title. The pictures drawn of the finished depravity of such characters in high life, in the old comedies and novels, can hardly have been thrown away upon the persons themselves, any more than upon the world at large. Little *Terence O’Cutter*, the delicious protégé of *Lord Trinket* and *Lady Free love*, is a fit instrument for them to use, and follows in the train of such principals, as naturally and assuredly as their shadow. *Sir Harry Beagle* is a coarse, but striking character of a thorough-bred fox-hunting country squire. He has but one idea in his head, but one sentiment in his heart—and that is *his stud*. This idea haunts his imagination, tinges or imbues every other object, and accounts for his whole phraseology, appearance, costume, and conduct. *Sir Harry’s* ruling passion is varied very ingeniously, and often turned to a very ludicrous account. There is a necessary monotony in the

humour which arises from a want of more than one idea, but the obviousness of the jest almost makes up for the recurrence of it; if the means of exciting mirth are mechanical, the effect is sure; and to say that a hearty laugh is cheaply purchased, is not a serious objection against it. When an author is terribly conscious of plagiarism he seldom confesses it; when the obligation does not press his conscience, he sometimes does. Colman, in the advertisement to the first edition of the "*Jealous Wife*," apologises for the freedom which he has used in borrowing from "*Tom Jones*." In reading this modest excuse, though we had seen the play several times, we could not imagine what part of the plot was taken from Fielding. We did not suspect that *Miss Russet* was *Sophia Western*, and that old *Russet* and *Sir Harry Beagle* between them, somehow represented *Squire Western* and young *Bliffl*. But so it is! The outline of the plot, and some of the characters, are certainly the same; but the filling up destroys the likeness. There is all in the novel that there is in the play; but there is so much in the novel that is not in the play, that the total impression is quite different, and loses even an appearance of resemblance. In the same manner, though a profile, or a shade of a face, is exactly the same as the original, we with difficulty recognize it, from the absence of so many other particulars. Colman might have kept his own secret, and no one would have been the wiser for it.

W. H.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. LLOYD—SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK.

THE Jealous Wife! A Comedy!—Poor Man!
A charming subject—but a wretched plan.
His skittish wit, o'erleaping the due bound,
Commits flat trespass upon tragic ground.
Quarrels, upbraidings, jealousies, and spleen,
Grow too familiar in the comic scene.
Tinge but the language with heroic chime,
'Tis passion, pathos, character sublime!
What round big words had swell'd the pompous scene
A king the husband, and the wife a queen!
Then might distraction rend her graceful hair,
See sightless forms, and scream, and gape, and stare.
Drawcansir Death had rag'd without controul,
Here the drawn dagger, there the poison'd bowl.
What eyes had stream'd at all the whining woe!
What hands had thunder'd at each *hah!* and *ho!*

But peace! the gentle prologue custom sends,
Like drum and serjeant, to beat up for friends.
At vice and folly, each a lawful game,
Our author flies, but with no partial aim;
He read the manners, open as they lie
In nature's volume, to the gen'ral eye.
Books too he read, nor blush'd to use their store—
He does but what his betters did before.
Shakespeare has done it; and the *Grecian* stage
Caught truth of character from *Homer's* page.

If in his scenes an honest skill is shown,
And, borrowing little, much appears his own;
If what a master's happy pencil drew,
He brings more forward in dramatic view;
To your decision he submits his cause,
Secure of candour—anxious for applause.

But if, all rude, his artless scenes deface
The simple beauties which he meant to grace;
If an invader upon others' land,
He spoil and plunder with a robber's hand,
Do justice on him, as on fools before—
And give to *blockheads* past, one *blockhead* more.

EPILOGUE.

Ladies ! I've had a squabble with the poet—
About his characters, and you shall know it.
“ Young man,” said I, “ restrain your saucy satire !
My part's ridiculous—false—out of nature.
Fine draughts indeed of ladies ! sure you hate 'em ?
Why, sir !—My part is *scandalum magnatum*.”

“ Lord, ma'am,” said he, “ to copy life my trade is,
And poets ever have made free with ladies ;
(One Simon—the deuce take such names as these !
A hard Greek name—O—ay—Simonides—
He show'd our freaks, this whim, and that desire,
Rose first from earth, sea, air, nay, some from fire ;
(Or that we owe our persons, minds, and features,
'To birds, forsooth, and filthy four-legg'd creatures.

“ The dame, of manners various, temper fickle,
Now all for pleasure, now the conventicle !
Who prays, then raves, now calm, now all commotion,
Rises another Venus from the ocean.

“ Constant at ev'ry sale, the curious fair
Who longs for Dresden and old China ware ;
Who dotes on pagods, and gives up vile man
For niddle-noddle figures from Japan ;
Critic in jars and josses, shows her birth
Drawn, like the brittle ware itself, from earth.

“ The flaunting she, so stately, rich, and vain,
Who gain'd her conquests by her length of train,
While all her vanity is under sail,
Sweeps a proud peacock, with a gaudy tail.

“ Husband and wife, with sweets ! and dears ! and loves,
What are they but a pair of cooing doves ?
But seiz'd with spleen, fits, humours, and all that,
Your dove and turtle turn to dog and cat.

EPILOGUE.

“The gossip, prude, old maid, coquette, and trapes,
Are parrots, foxes, magpies, wasps, and apes;
But she, with ev’ry charm of form and mind,
Oh! she’s—sweet soul—the phoenix of her kind.”

 This his apology!—’Tis rank abuse—
A fresh affront, instead of an excuse!
His own sex rather such description suits -
Why don’t he draw their characters—the brutes!
Ay, let him paint those ugly monsters, men!
Mean time—mend we our lives, he’ll mend his pen

Costume.

OAKLY.

Gentleman's dress suit and hat.

MAJOR OAKLY.

Blue and silver (infantry) regimentals, hat and feather.

CHARLES.

First dress.—A black coat, buff waistcoat, and breeches.—Second dress.—Dress coat, white waistcoat, and green polisse.

RUSSET.

Drab frock, red waistcoat, cord breeches, country hat.

SIR HARRY BEAGLE.

Grey frock, buff waistcoat, scarlet under-waistcoat, white cord breeches, small country hat.

LORD TRINKET.

First dress.—Fashionable coat, slate-colour overalls, great coat, white breeches.—Second.—Fashionable full dress.

CAPTAIN O'CUTTER.

Blue naval uniform, white waistcoat and breeches.

PARIS.

French coat, striped pink white waistcoat, buff pantaloons trimmed with black.

MRS. OAKLY.

White sarsnet dress, trimmed with white fringe; leno diapers, trimmed with ditto.

LADY FREFLOVE.

Crimson crape dress, trimmed with silver.

HARRIOT.

White satin body; white petticoat, trimmed with lace and white satin riband.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is two hours and fifty-seven minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes—the second, forty—the third, thirty-five—the fourth, thirty-seven—the fifth, thirty-five—The half price commences, at nine o'clock.

Persons Represented.

As it was originally acted at Drury Lane, in 1761

<i>Oakly</i>	Mr. Garrick.
<i>Major Oakly</i>	Mr. Yates.
<i>Charles</i>	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Russet</i>	Mr. Burton.
<i>Sir Harry Beagle</i>	Mr. King
<i>Captain O' Cutter</i>	Mr. Moody.
<i>Lord Trinket</i>	Mr. O'Brien
<i>Paris</i>	Mr. Blaket.
<i>William</i>	Mr. Ackman.
<i>John</i>	Mr. Castle.
<i>Tom</i>	Mr. Clough.
<i>Servant</i>	Mr. Fox.
<i>Mrs. Oakly</i>	Mrs. Pritchard.
<i>Lady Free love</i>	Mrs. Clive.
<i>Harriot</i>	Miss Pritchard.
<i>Toilet</i>	Mrs. Johnson.
<i>Chambermaid</i>	Mrs. Simpson.

1817-18.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Covent-Garden.</i>	<i>Haymarket</i>
<i>Oakly</i>	Mr. Pope.	Mr. Young.	Mr. Conway
<i>Major Oakly</i>	Mr. Palmer.	Mr. Terry.	Mr. Terry
<i>Charles</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. C. Kemble.	Mr. Lacy.
<i>Russet</i>	Mr. Downton.	Mr. Blanchard.	Mr. Williams
<i>Sir Harry Beagle</i>	Mr. Harley.	Mr. Fawcett.	Mr. Oxberry
<i>Captain O' Cutter</i>	Mr. Johnstone.	Mr. Tokely.	Mr. Ward.
<i>Lord Trinket</i>	Mr. Penley.	Mr. Jones.	Mr. Decamp
<i>Paris</i>	Mr. Wewitzer.	Mr. Menage.	Mr. Elsworth
<i>William</i>	Mr. Evans.	Mr. Jefferies.	Mr. C Jones
<i>John</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Lambert.	Mr. Coates
<i>Tom</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. Atkins.	Mr. Coveney
<i>Servant</i>	Mr. Minton.	Mr. Louis.	Mr. Young
<i>Mrs Oakly</i>	Mrs. Glover.	Miss O'Neill.	Mrs. Johnson
<i>Lady Free love</i> ...	Mrs. Harlowe.	Mrs. Gibbs.	Miss Boyce.
<i>Harriot</i>	Mrs. Orger.	Miss Bristow.	Mrs. Young
<i>Toilet</i>	Miss Tidswell.	Miss Logan.	Mrs. Jones.
<i>Chambermaid</i>		Mrs. Hardy.	Mrs. Coveney

Stage Directions.

By R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.....		Left Hand.
S.E.....		Second Entrance
U.E.....		Upper Entrance.
M.D.....		Middle Door.
D.F.....		Door in Flat.
R.H.D.....		Right Hand Door
L.H.D.....		Left Hand Door.

THE JEALOUS WIFE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Oakly's House.—Noise heard within, L.H.*

Mrs. O. (Within.) Don't tell me—I know it is so—It's monstrous, and I will not bear it.

Oak. (Within.) But, my dear!—

Mrs. O. Nay, nay, &c. (*Squabbling within, L.H.*)

Enter MRS. OAKLY, L.H. with a letter, followed by OAKLY.

Mrs. O. Say what you will, Mr. Oakly, you shall never persuade me but this is some filthy intrigue of yours.

Oak. I can assure you, my love—

Mrs. O. Your love!—Don't I know your—Tell me, I say, this instant, every circumstance relating to this letter.

Oak. How can I tell you, when you will not so much as let me see it?

Mrs. O. Look you, Mr. Oakly, this usage is not to be borne. You take a pleasure in abusing my tenderness and soft disposition. To be perpetually running over the whole town, nay, the whole kingdom too, in pursuit of your amours! Did not I discover that you was great with mademoiselle, my own woman? Did not you contract a shameful familiarity with Mrs. Freeman? Did not I detect your intrigue with Lady Wealthy? Was not you—

Oak. Oons! madam, the Grand Turk himself has not half so many mistresses! You throw me out of all patience! Do I know any body but our common

friends?—Am I visited by any body that does not visit you?—Do I ever go out, unless you go with me?—And am I not as constantly by your side, as if I was tied to your apron-strings?

Mrs. O. Go, go, you are a false man. Have not I found you out a thousand times? And have not I this moment a letter in my hand, which convinces me of your baseness? Let me know the whole affair, or I will—

Oak. Let you know! Let me know what you would have of me—You stop my letter before it comes to my hands, and then expect that I should know the contents of it!

Mrs. O. Heaven be praised I stopped it!—I suspected some of these doings for some time past!—But the letter informs me who she is, and I'll be revenged on her sufficiently. Oh, you base man, you!

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Oak. I beg, my dear, that you would moderate your passion! Show me the letter, and I'll convince you of my innocence.

Mrs. O. Innocence!—Abominable!—Innocence!—But I am not to be made such a fool—I am convinced of your perfidy, and very sure that—

Oak. 'Sdeath and fire! your passion hurries you out of your senses. Will you hear me?

Mrs. O. No; you are a base man: and I will not hear you.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Oak. Why, then, my dear, since you will neither talk reasonably yourself, nor listen to reason from me, I shall take my leave till you are in a better humour. So, your servant!

(*Going.*)

Mrs. O. Ay, go, you cruel man!—Go to your mistresses, and leave your poor wife to her miseries.—How unfortunate a woman am I!—I could die with vexation.

(*Throwing herself into a chair.*)

Oak. There it is—Now dare not I stir a step further—If I offer to go, she is in one of her fits in an instant.—Never sure was woman at once of so violent and so delicate a constitution! What shall I say to sooth her?

—(*Aside.*)—Nay, never make thyself so uneasy, my dear—Come, come, you know I love you.

Mrs. O. I know you hate me; and that your unkindness and barbarity will be the death of me.

(*Whining.*)

Oak. Do not vex yourself at this rate—I love you most passionately—Indeed I do—This must be some mistake.

Mrs. O. Oh, I am an unhappy woman! (*Weeping.*)

Oak. Dry up thy tears, my love, and be comforted! You will find that I am not to blame in this matter—Come, let me see this letter—Nay, you shall not deny me.

(*Takes the letter.*)

Mrs. O. There! take it; you know the hand, I am sure.

Oak. (*Reads.*) To Charles Oakly, Esq.—Hand! 'Tis a clerk-like hand, a good round text! and was certainly never penned by a fair lady.

Mrs. O. Ay, laugh at me, do!

Oak. Forgive me, my love, I did not mean to laugh at thee. But what says the letter?—(*Reads.*)—Daughter eloped—you must be privy to it—scandalous—dishonourable—satisfaction—revenge—um, um, um, —injured father,

HENRY RUSSET.

Mrs. O. (*Rising.*) Well, sir, you see I have detected you; tell me this instant where she is concealed.

Oak. So—so—so—This hurts me—I'm shocked.

(*To himself.*)

Mrs. O. What, are you confounded with your guilt? Have I caught you at last?

Oak. O that wicked Charles! To decoy a young lady from her parents in the country! The profligacy of the young fellows of this age is abominable. (*To himself.*)

Mrs. O. (*Half aside, and musing.*) Charles!—Let me see!—Charles!—No!—Impossible!—This is all a trick.

Oak. He has certainly ruined this poor lady.

(*To himself.*)

Mrs. O. Art, art, all art!—There's a sudden turn now!—You have ready wit for an intrigue, I find.

Oak. Such an abandoned action! I wish I had never had the care of him.

Mrs. O. Mighty fine, *Mr. Oakly!*—Go on, sir, go on! I see what you mean. Your assurance provokes me beyond your very falsehood itself. So you imagine, sir, that this affected concern, this flimsy pretence about Charles, is to bring you off. Matchless confidence! But I am armed against every thing—I am prepared for all your dark schemes: I am aware of all your low stratagems.

Oak. See there now! Was ever any thing so provoking? To persevere in your ridiculous—For heaven's sake, my dear, don't distract me. When you see my mind thus agitated and uneasy, that a young fellow, whom his dying father, my own brother, committed to my care, should be guilty of such enormous wickedness; I say, when you are witness of my distress on this occasion, how can you be weak enough and cruel enough to—

Mrs. O. Prodigiously well, sir! You do it very well. Nay, keep it up, carry it on; there's nothing like going through with it. O, you artful creature! But, sir, I am not to be so easily satisfied. I do not believe a syllable of all this. Give me the letter—(*Snatches the letter.*)—You shall sorely repent this vile business, for I am resolved that I will know the bottom of it.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Oak. This is beyond all patience. Provoking woman! Her absurd suspicions interpret every thing the wrong way. But this ungracious boy! in how many troubles will he involve his own and his lady's family!—I never imagined that he was of such abandoned principles.

Enter MAJOR OAKLY and CHARLES, L.H.

Charles. Good-morrow, sir!

Maj. O. Good-morrow, brother, good-morrow:—What! you have been at the old work, I find. I heard you—ding, dong! i'faith;—she has rung a noble peal

in your ears. But how now? Why sure you've had a remarkable warm bout on't.—You seem more ruffled than usual.

Oak. I am, indeed, brother! Thanks to that young gentleman there. Have a care, Charles! you may be called to a severe account for this. The honour of a family, sir, is no such light matter.

Charles. Sir!

Maj. O. Hey-day! What, has a curtain lecture produced a lecture of morality? What is all this?

Oak. To a profligate mind, perhaps, these things may appear agreeable in the beginning. But don't you tremble at the consequences?

Charles. I see, sir, that you are displeased with me; but I am quite at a loss to guess at the occasion.

Oak. Tell me, sir!—where is Miss Harriot Russet?
(Crosses to centre.)

Charles. Miss Harriot Russet!—Sir—Explain.

Oak. Have not you decoyed her from her father?

Charles. I!—Decoyed her—Decoyed my Harriot!—I would sooner die than do her the least injury—What can this mean?

Maj. O. I believe the young dog has been at her, after all.

Oak. I was in hopes, Charles, you had better principles. But there's a letter just come from her father—

Charles. A letter!—What letter? Dear sir, give it me. Some intelligence of my Harriot, major!—The letter, sir, the letter this moment, for heaven's sake!

Oak. If this warmth, Charles, tends to prove your innocence—

Charles. Dear sir, excuse me—I'll prove any thing—Let me but see this letter and I'll—

Oak. Let you see it!—I could hardly get a sight of it myself. Mrs. Oakly has it.

Charles. Has she got it? Major, I'll be with you again directly. [Exit hastily, n. II.]

Maj. O. Hey-day! The devil's in the boy! What a

fiery set of people! By my truth, I think the whole family is made of nothing but combustibles.

Oak. I like this emotion; it looks well: it may serve too to convince my wife of the folly of her suspicions. Would to heaven I could quiet them for ever?

Maj. O. Why pray now, my dear, naughty brother, what heinous offence have you committed this morning? What new cause of suspicion? You have been asking one of the maids to mend your ruffle, I suppose, or have been hanging your head out at the window, when a pretty young woman has passed by, or—

Oak. How can you trifle with my distresses, major? Did not I tell you it was about a letter?

Maj. O. A letter!—hum—A suspicious circumstance to be sure! What, and the seal a true lover's knot now, hey? or a heart transfixed with darts; or possibly the wax bore the industrious impression of a thimble; or perhaps the folds were lovingly connected by a wafer, pricked with a pin, and the direction written in a vile scrawl, and not a word spelt as it should be! ha! ha, ha, ha!

Oak. Pooh! brother—Whatever it was, the letter, you find, was for Charles, not for me—this outrageous jealousy is the devil. (Crosses to R.N.)

Maj. O. Mere matrimonial blessings and domestic comfort, brother! jealousy is a certain sign of love.

Oak. Love! it is this very love that hath made us both so miserable. Her love for me has confined me to my house, like a state prisoner, without the liberty of seeing my friends, or the use of pen, ink, and paper; while my love for her has made such a fool of me, that I have never had the spirit to contradict her.

(Crosses to L.H.)

Maj. O. Ay, ay, there you've hit it; Mrs. Oakly would make an excellent wife, if you did but know how to manage her.

Oak. You are a rare fellow indeed to talk of managing a wife.—A debauched bachelor—a rattle-brained, rioting fellow—who have picked up your common-place notions of women in bagnios, taverns, and the

camp; whose most refined commerce with the sex has been in order to delude country girls at your quarters, or to besiege the virtue of abigails, milliners, or mantua-makers' prentices. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Maj. O. So much the better!—so much the better! women are all alike in the main, brother, high or low, married or single, quality or no quality. I have found them so, from a duchess down to a milk-maid; every woman is a tyrant at the bottom. But they could never make a fool of me. No, no! no woman should ever domineer over me, let her be mistress or wife.

Oak. Single men can be no judges in these cases. They must happen in all families. But when things are driven to extremities—to see a woman in uneasiness—a woman one loves too—one's wife—who can withstand it? You neither speak nor think like a man that has loved and been married, major.

Maj. O. I wish I could hear a married man speak my language. I'm a bachelor, it's true; but I am no bad judge of your case for all that. I know your's and Mrs. Oakly's disposition to a hair. She is all impetuosity and fire—a very magazine of touchwood and gunpowder. You are hot enough too, upon occasion, but then it's over in an instant. In comes love and conjugal affection, as you call it; that is mere folly and weakness—and you draw off your forces, just when you should pursue the attack, and follow your advantage. Have at her with spirit, and the day's your own, brother.

Oak. Why, what would you have me do?

Maj. O. Do as you please for one month, whether she likes it or not; and I'll answer for it, she will consent you shall do as you please all her life after. In short, do but show yourself a man of spirit, leave off whining about love and tenderness, and nonsense, and the business is done, brother.

Oak. I believe you are in the right, major! I see you are in the right. I'll do it—I'll certainly do it—But then it hurts me to the soul, to think what uneasiness I shall give her. The first opening of my

design will throw her into fits, and the pursuit of it, perhaps, may be fatal.

Maj. O. Fits! ha, ha, ha!—I'll engage to cure her of her fits. Nobody understands hysterical cases better than I do; besides, my sister's symptoms are not very dangerous. Did you ever hear of her falling into a fit when you was not by?—Was she ever found in convulsions in her closet?—No, no, these fits, the more care you take of them, the more you will increase the distemper; let them alone, and they will wear themselves out, I warrant you. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Oak. True, very true—you are certainly in the right—I'll follow your advice. Where do you dine to-day?—I'll order the coach, and go with you.

Maj. O. O brave! keep up this spirit, and you are made for ever.

Oak. You shall see now, major!—Who's there?

Enter SERVANT, L.H.D.

Order the coach directly. I shall dine out to-day.

Serv. The coach, sir?—Now, sir?

Oak. Ay, now, immediately.

Serv. Now, sir!—the—the—coach, sir?—that is—my mistress—

Maj. O. Sirrah! do as you are bid. Bid them put to this instant. *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Serv. Yes—yes, sir—yes, sir. *[Exit, L.H.D.]*

Oak. Well, where shall we dine?

Maj. O. At the St. Alban's, or where you will. This is excellent, if you will but hold it.

Oak. I will have my own way, I am determined.

Maj. O. That's right:

Oak. I am steel.

Maj. O. Bravo!

Oak. Adamant.

Maj. O. Bravissimo!

Oak. Just what you'd have me.

Maj. O. Why that's well said. But will you do it?

Oak. I will.

Maj. O. You wont.

Oak. I will. I'll be a fool to her no longer. But harkye, major, my hat and gloves lie in my study. I'll go and steal them out, while she is busy talking with Charles.

Maj. O. Steal them! for shame!—Pr'ythce take them boldly; call for them; make them bring them to you here; and go out with spirit, in the face of your whole family.

Oak. No, no—you are wrong—let her rave after I am gone, and when I return, you know, I shall exert myself with more propriety, after this open affront to her authority.

Maj. O. Well, take your own way.

Oak. Ay, ay—let me manage it, let me manage it.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Maj. O. Manage it! ay, to be sure, you are a rare manager! It is dangerous they say, to meddle between man and wife. I am no great favourite of Mrs. Oakly's already; and, in a week's time, I expect to have the door shut in my teeth.

Enter CHARLES, R.H.

How now, Charles, what news?

Charles. Ruined and undone! She's gone, uncle, my Harriot's lost for ever.

Maj. O. Gone off with a man?—I thought so;—they are all alike.

Charles. Oh, no! Fled to avoid that hateful match with Sir Harry Beagle.

Maj. O. Faith, a girl of spirit; but whence comes all this intelligence?

Charles. In an angry letter from her father. How miserable I am! If I had not offended my Harriot, much offended her, by that foolish riot and drinking at your house in the country, she would certainly, at such a time, have taken refuge in my arms.

Maj. O. A very agreeable refuge for a young lady to be sure, and extremely decent!

Charles. What a heap of extravagancies was I guilty of!

Maj. O. Extravagancies with a witness! Ah, you silly young dog, you would ruin yourself with her father, in spite of all I could do. There you sat, as drunk as a lord, telling the old gentleman the whole affair, and swearing you would drive Sir Harry Beagle out of the country, though I kept winking and nodding, pulling you by the sleeve, and kicking your shins under the table, in hopes of stopping you; but all to no purpose.

Charles. What distress may she be in at this instant! Alone and defenceless!—Where, where can she be?

Maj. O. What relations or friends has she in town?

Charles. Relations! let me see—Faith, I have it!—If she is in town, ten to one but she is at her aunt's, Lady Freelove's. I'll go thither immediately.

(Crosses to L II.)

Maj. O. Lady Frelove's!—Hold, hold, Charles!—Do you know her ladyship?

Charles. Not much! but I'll break through all, to get to my Harriot.

Maj. O. I do know her ladyship.

Charles. Well, and what do you know of her?

Maj. O. O, nothing!—her ladyship is a woman of the world, that's all.

Charles. What do you mean?

Maj. O. That Lady Frelove is an arrant—By-the-bye, did not she, last summer, make formal proposals to Harriot's father from Lord Trinket?

Charles. Yes; but they were received with the utmost contempt. The old gentleman, it seems, hates a lord, and he told her so in plain terms.

Maj. O. Such an aversion to the nobility may not run in the blood. The girl, I warrant you, has no objection. However, if she's there, watch her narrowly, Charles. Lady Frelove is as mischievous as a monkey, and as cunning too. Have a care of her, I say, have a care of her.

Charles. If she's there, I'll have her out of the house within this half hour, or set fire to it.

Maj. O. Nay, now you are too violent—stay a moment, and we'll consider what's best to be done.

Enter OAKLY, R.H.

Oak. Come, is the coach ready? Let us be gone. Does Charles go with us?

Charles. I go with you!—What can I do! I am so vexed and distracted, and so many thoughts crowd in upon me, I don't know which way to turn myself.

Mrs. O. (Within.) The coach!—dines out!—Where is your master?

Oak. Zounds, brother! here she is!

Re-enter MRS. OAKLY, R.H.

Mrs. O. Pray, Mr. Oakly, what is the matter you cannot dine at home to-day?

Oak. Don't be uneasy, my dear!—I have a little business to settle with my brother; so I am only just going to dinner with him and Charles, to the tavern.

Mrs. O. Why cannot you settle your business here, as well as at a tavern? But it is some of your ladies' business, I suppose, and so you must get rid of my company. This is chiefly your fault, Major Oakly!

(Crosses to him.)

Maj. O. Lord, sister, what signifies it, whether a man dines at home or abroad? *(Coolly.)*

Mrs. O. It signifies a great deal, sir! and I don't choose—

Maj. O. Phoo! let him go, my dear sister. let him go! he will be ten times better company when he comes back. I tell you what, sister—you sit at home till you are quite tired of one another, and then you grow cross, and fall out. If you would but part a little now and then, you might meet again in humour.

Mrs. O. I beg, Major Oakly, that you would trouble yourself about your own affairs; and let me tell you, sir, that I—

Oak. Nay, do not put thyself into a passion with the major, my dear!—It is not his fault; and I shall come back to thee very soon.

Mrs. O. Come back!—why need you go out?—I know well enough when you mean to deceive me; for then there is always a pretence of dining with Sir John, or my lord, or somebody; but when you tell me that you are going to a tavern, it's such a bare-faced affront—
(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Oak. This is so strange now!—Why, my dear, I shall only just—

Mrs. O. Only just go after the lady in the letter, I suppose.

Oak. Well, well, I wont go then. Will that convince you? I'll stay with you, my dear. Will that satisfy you?

Maj. O. For shame! hold out, if you are a man.

(*Apart.*)

Oak. She has been so much vexed this morning already, I must humour her a little now. (*Apart.*)

Maj. O. Fie, fie! go out, or you are undone. (*Apart.*)

Oak. You see it's impossible. I'll dine at home with thee, my love. (*Apart to Mrs. Oakly.*)

Mrs. O. Ay, ay, pray do, sir. Dine at a tavern, indeed!
(*Going.*)

Oak. (*Returning.*) You may depend on me another time, major.

Maj. O. Steel and adamant!—Ah!

Mrs. O. (*Returning.*) Mr. Oakly!

Oak. O, my dear! [*Exit with Mrs. Oakly, R.H.*]

Maj. O. Ha, ha, ha! there's a picture of resolution! there goes a philosopher for you! ha, Charles!

Charles. O, uncle! I have no spirits to laugh now.

Maj. O. So! I have a fine time on't between you and my brother. Will you meet me to dinner at the St. Alban's by four? We'll drink her health, and think of this affair.

Charles. Don't depend on me. I shall be running all over the town, in pursuit of my Harriot; at all events, I'll go directly to Lady Freelove's. If I find her not there, which way I shall direct myself, heaven knows.

Maj. O. Harkye, Charles!—If you meet with her, you may be at a loss. Bring her to my house; I have a snug ~~place~~ ^{room}, and—

Charles. Phoo ! Pr'ythee, uncle, don't trifle with me now.

Maj. O. Well, seriously then, my house is at your service.

Charles. I thank you ; but I must be gone.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, bring her to my house, and we'll settle the whole affair for you. You shall clap her into a post-chaise, take the chaplain of our regiment along with you, wheel her down to Scotland, and when you come back, send to settle her fortune with her father ; that's the modern art of making love, Charles !

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Bull and Gate Inn.*

Enter SIR HARRY BEAGLE and TOM, L.H.

Sir H. Ten guineas a mare, and a crown the man : hey, Tom !

Tom. Yes, your honour.

Sir H. And are you sure, Tom, that there is no flaw in his blood ?

Tom. He's a good thing, sir, and as little beholden to the ground, as any horse that ever went over the turf upon four legs. Why here's his whole pedigree, your honour !

Sir H. Is it attested ?

Tom. Very well attested ; it is signed by Jack Spur and my lord Startal. (*Giving the Pedigree.*)

Sir H. Let me see. (*Reads.*) *Tom-come-tickle-me was out of the famous Tantivy mare, by Sir Aaron Driver's chesnut horse, White Stockings. White Stockings, his dam, was got by Lord Hedge's South Barb, full sister to the Proserpine Filly, and his sire Tom Jones ; his grandam was the Irish Duchess, and*

his grandsire Squire Sportley's Trajan ; his great and great great grandam were Newmarket Peggy and Black Moll ; and his great grandsire and great great grandsire, were Sir Ralph Whip's Regulus, and the famous Prince Anumaboo.

his
JOHN X SPUR.
mark.

STARTAL.

Tom. All fine horses, and won every thing ! a foal out of your honour's bald-fac'd Venus, by this horse, would beat the world.

Sir H. Well then, we'll think on't.—But, plague on't, Tom, I have certainly knocked up my little roan gelding in this damn'd wild-goose chase of threescore miles an end.

Tom. He's deadly blown, to be sure, your honour ; and I am afraid we are upon a wrong scent after all. Madam Harriot certainly took across the country, instead of coming on to London.

Sir H. No, no, we traced her all the way up.—But d'ye hear, Tom, look out among the stables and repositories here in town, for a smart road nag, and a strong horse to carry a portmanteau.

Tom. Sir Roger Turf's horses are to be sold—I'll see if there's ever a tight thing there—but I suppose, sir, you would have one somewhat stronger than Snip—I don't think he's quite enough of a horse for your honour.

Sir H. Not enough of a horse ! Snip's a powerful gelding : master of two stone more than my weight. If Snip stands sound, I would not take a hundred guineas for him. Poor Snip ! go into the stable, Tom, see they give him a warm mash, and look at his heels and his eyes.—But where's Mr. Russet all this while ?

Tom. I left the 'squire at breakfast on a cold pigeon pie, and inquiring after madam Harriot, in the kitchen. I'll let him know your honour would be glad to see him here.

Sir H. Ay, do ; but harkye, Tom, be sure you take care of Snip.

Tom. I'll warrant your honour.

Sir H. I'll be down in the stables myself bye-and-by.
—[*Exit Tom, l. 11.*]—Let me see—out of the famous Tantivy by White Stockings? White Stockings, his dam, full sister to the Proserpine Filly; and his sire—plague on't, how unlucky it is that this damned accident should happen in the Newmarket week!—Ten to one I lose my match with lord Chokejade, by not riding myself, and I shall have no opportunity to hedge my bets neither—what a damned piece of work have I made on't—I have knocked up poor Snip, shall lose my match, and as to Harriot, why the odds are that I lose my match there too—a skittish young fil! If I once get her tight in hand, I'll make her wince for it.—Her estate, joined to my own, I would have the finest stud and the noblest kennel in the whole country.—But here comes her father, puffing and blowing, like a broken-winded horse up hill.

Enter RUSSET, l. 11.

Rus. Well, Sir Harry, have you heard any thing of her?

Sir H. Yes, I have been asking Tom about her, and he says you may have her for five hundred guineas.

Rus. Five hundred guineas! how d'ye mean? where is she? which way did she take?

Sir H. Why first she went to Epsom, then to Lincoln, then to Nottingham, and now she is at York.

Rus. Impossible! she could not go over half the ground in the time. What the devil are you talking of?

Sir H. Of the mare you was just now saying you wanted to buy.

Rus. The devil take the mare!—who would think of her, when I am mad about an affair of so much more consequence?

Sir H. You seemed mad about her a little while ago. She's a fine mare, and a thing of shape and blood.

Rus. Damn her blood!—Harriot! my dear, provoking Harriot! Where can she be? Have you got any intelligence of her?

Sir H. No, faith, not I : we seem to be quite thrown out here—but, however, I have ordered Tom to try if he can hear any thing of her among the ostlers.

Rus. Why don't you inquire after her yourself? why don't you run up and down the whole town after her?—t'other young rascal knows where she is, I warrant you.—What a plague it is to have a daughter! When one loves her to distraction, and has toiled and laboured to make her happy, the ungrateful slut will sooner go to hell her own way—but she shall have him—I will make her happy, if I break her heart for it.—A provoking gipsy—to run away, and torment her poor father, that dotes on her! I'll never see her face again.—Sir Harry, how can we get any intelligence of her? Why don't you speak? why don't you tell me?—Zounds! you seem as indifferent as if you did not care a farthing about her.

Sir H. Indifferent! you may well call me indifferent!—this damned chase after her will cost me a thousand—if it had not been for her, I would not have been off the course this week to have saved the lives of my whole family—I'll hold you six to two that—

Rus. Zounds! hold your tongue, or talk more to the purpose—I swear she is too good for you—you don't deserve such a wife—a fine, dear, sweet, lovely, charming girl!—She'll break my heart.—How shall I find her out?—Do, pr'ythee, Sir Harry, my dear honest friend, consider how we may discover where she is fled to.

Sir H. Suppose you put an advertisement into the newspapers, describing her marks, her age, her height, and where she strayed from. I recovered a bay mare once by that method.

Rus. Advertise her!—What! describe my daughter, and expose her, in the public papers, with a reward for bringing her home, like horses stolen or strayed!—recovered a bay mare!—the devil's in the fellow!—he thinks of nothing but racers, and bay mares, and stallions.—'Sdeath, I wish your—

Sir H. I wish Harriot was fairly pounded ; it would save us both a deal of trouble.

Rus. Which way shall I turn myself?—I am half distracted.—If I go to that young dog's house, he has certainly conveyed her somewhere out of my reach—if she does not send to me to-day, I'll give her up for ever—perhaps, though, she may have met with some accident, and has nobody to assist her.—No, she is certainly with that young rascal.—I wish she was dead, and I was dead.—I'll blow young Oakly's brains out.

Re-enter TOM, L.H.

Sir H. Well, Tom, how is poor Snip ?

Tom. A little better, sir, after his warm mash : but Lady, the pointing bitch that followed you all the way, is deadly foot-sore.

Rus. Damn Snip and Lady!—have you heard any thing of Harriot ?

Tom. Why, I came on purpose to let my master and your honour know, that John Ostler says as how, just such a lady as I told him Madam Harriot was, came here in a four-wheel chaise, and was fetched away soon after by a fine lady in a chariot.

Rus. Did she come alone ?

Tom. Quite alone, only a servant maid, please your honour.

Rus. And what part of the town did they go to ?

Tom. John Ostler says as how they bid the coachman drive to Grosvenor-square.

Sir H. Soho ! puss—Yoicks !

Rus. She is certainly gone to that young rogue—he has got his aunt to fetch her from hence—or else she is with her own aunt, Lady Free love—they both live in that part of the town. I'll go to the house, and in the mean while, Sir Harry, you shall step to Lady Free love's. We'll find her, I warrant you. I'll teach my young mistress to be gadding. She shall marry you

to-night. Come along, Sir Harry, come along; we won't lose a minute. Come along.

Sir H. Soho! hark forward! wind 'em and cross 'em! hark forward! Yoicks! Yoicks! | *Exeunt, L.H.*

SCENE II.—*Oakly's House.*

Enter Mrs. OAKLY.

Mrs. O. After all, that letter was certainly intended for my husband. I see plain enough they are all in a plot against me. My husband intriguing, the major working him up to affront me, Charles owning his letters, and so playing into each other's hands.—'They think me a fool, I find—but I'll be too much for them yet—I have desired to speak with Mr. Oakly, and expect him here immediately. His temper is naturally open; and if he thinks my anger abated and my suspicions laid asleep, he will certainly betray himself by his behaviour. I'll assume an air of good humour, pretend to believe the fine story they have trumped up, throw him off his guard, and so draw the secret out of him.—Here he comes.—How hard it is to dissemble one's anger! Oh, I could rate him soundly; but I'll keep down my indignation at present, though it chokes me.

Enter OAKLY, L.H.

O, my dear! I am very glad to see you. Pray sit down—(*They sit.*)—I longed to see you. It seemed an age till I had an opportunity of talking over the silly affair that happened this morning. (*Mildly.*)

Oak. Why really, my dear—

Mrs. O. Nay, don't look so grave now. Come—it's all over. Charles and you have cleared up matters. I am satisfied.

Oak. Indeed! I rejoice to hear it! You make me

happy beyond my expectation. This disposition will ensure our felicity. Do but lay aside your cruel, unjust suspicion, and we should never have the least difference.

Mrs. O. Indeed I begin to think so. I'll endeavour to get the better of it. And really sometimes it is very ridiculous. My uneasiness this morning, for instance, ha, ha, ha! To be so much alarmed about the idle letter, which turned out quite another thing at last—was not I very angry with you? ha, ha, ha! *(Affecting a laugh.)*

Oak. Don't mention it. Let us both forget it. Your present cheerfulness makes amends for every thing.

Mrs. O. I am apt to be too violent; I love you too well to be quite easy about you.—*(Fondly.)*—Well—no matter—what is become of Charles?

Oak. Poor fellow! he is on the wing, rambling all over the town, in pursuit of this young lady.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone, pray?

Oak. First of all, I believe to some of her relations.

Mrs. O. Relations! Who are they? Where do they live?

Oak. There is an aunt of her's lives just in the neighbourhood; Lady Free love.

Mrs. O. Lady Free love! Oho! gone to Lady Free love's is he?—and do you think he will hear any thing of her.

Oak. I don't know: but I hope so, with all my soul.

Mrs. O. Hope! with all your soul; do you hope so? *(Alarmed.)*

Oak. Hope so! ye—yes—why, don't you hope so? *(Surprised.)*

Mrs. O. Why—yes—*(Recovering.)*—O, ay, to be sure. I hope it of all things. You know, my dear, it must give me great satisfaction, as well as yourself, to see Charles well settled.

Oak. I should think so; and really I don't know where he can be settled so well. She is a most deserving young woman, I assure you.

Mrs. O. You are well acquainted with her then?

Oak. To be sure, my dear ; after seeing her so often last summer, at the major's house in the country, and at her father's.

Mrs. O. So often !

Oak. Ay—very often—Charles took care of that—almost every day.

Mrs. O. Indeed ! But pray—a—a—I say— a—a—
(*Confused.*)

Oak. What do you say, my dear ?

Mrs. O. I say—a—a—(*Stammering.*)—Is she handsome ?

Oak. Prodigiously handsome, indeed.

Mrs. O. Prodigiously handsome ! and is she reckoned a sensible girl ?

Oak. A very sensible, modest, agreeable, young lady as ever I knew. You would be extremely fond of her, I am sure. You can't imagine how happy I was in her company. Poor Charles ! she soon made a conquest of him, and no wonder, she has so many elegant accomplishments ! such an infinite fund of cheerfulness and good humour. Why, she's the darling of the whole country.

Mrs. O. Lord ! you seem quite in raptures about her !

Oak. Raptures !—not at all. I was only telling you the young lady's character. I thought you would be glad to find that Charles had made so sensible a choice, and was so likely to be happy.

Mrs. O. Oh, Charles ! True, as you say, Charles will be mighty happy.

Oak. Don't you think so ?

Mrs. O. I am convinced of it. Poor Charles ! I am much concerned for him. He must be very uneasy about her. I was thinking whether we could be of any service to him in this affair.

Oak. Was you, my love ? that is very good of you. Why, to be sure, we must endeavour to assist him. Let me see—How can we manage it ? 'Gad ! I have hit it. The luckiest thought ! and it will be of great service to Charles.

Mrs. O. Well, what is it?—(*Eagerly.*)—You know I would do any thing to serve Charles, and oblige you. (*Mildly.*)

Oak. That is so kind ! Lord, my dear, if you would but always consider things in this proper light, and continue this amiable temper, we should be the happiest people—

Mrs. O. I believe so : but what's your proposal ?

Oak. I'm sure you'll like it.—Charles, you know, may perhaps be so lucky as to meet with this lady—

Mrs. O. True.

Oak. Now I was thinking, that he might, with your leave, my dear—

Mrs. O. Well !

Oak. Bring her home here—

Mrs. O. How !

Oak. Yes, bring her home, here, my dear ;—it will make poor Charles's mind quite easy : and you may take her under your protection till her father comes to town.

Mrs. O. Amazing ! this is even beyond my expectation.

Oak. Why !—what !—

Mrs. O. Was there ever such assurance !—(*Rises.*) Take her under my protection ! What ! would you keep her under my nose ?

Oak. Nay, I never conceived—I thought you would have approved—

Mrs. O. What ! make me your convenient woman ?—No place but my own house to serve your purposes !
(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Oak. Lord, this is the strangest misapprehension ! I am quite astonished.

Mrs. O. Astonished ! yes—confused, detected, betrayed, by your vain confidence of imposing on me. Why, sure you imagine me an idiot, a driveller. Charles, indeed ! yes, Charles is a fine excuse for you. The letter this morning, the letter, Mr. Oakly !

Oak. The letter ! why sure that—

Mrs. O. Is sufficiently explained. You have made it very clear to me. Now I am convinced. I have no doubt of your perfidy. But I thank you for some hints you have given me, and you may be sure I shall make use of them: nor will I rest till I have full conviction, and overwhelm you with the strongest proof of your baseness towards me.

Oak. Nay, but—

Mrs. O. Go, go! I have no doubt of your falsehood: away! [Exit, R.H.]

Oak. Was there ever any thing like this? Such unaccountable behaviour! angry I don't know why! jealous of I know not what!—Hints!—hints I have given her!—What can she mean?

Enter TOILET, crosses the stage, from R.H. to L.H.

Toilet! where are you going?

Toil. To order the porter to let in no company to my lady to-day. She wont see a single soul, sir.

[Exit, L.H.]

Oak. What an unhappy woman! Now will she sit all day feeding on her suspicions, till she has convinced herself of the truth of them.

Enter JOHN, crossing the stage, from R.H. to L.H.

Well, sir, what's your business?

John. Going to order the chariot, sir!—my lady's going out immediately. [Exit, L.H.]

Oak. Going out! what is all this?—But every way she makes me miserable. Wild and ungovernable as the sea or the wind! made up of storms and tempests! I can't bear it: and one way or other I will put an end to it. [Exit, R.H.]

SCENE III.—*Lady Free love's house.*

Enter LADY FREELOVE, R.H. with a card; a Servant following.

Lady F. (Reading as she enters.) And will take the liberty of waiting on her ladyship en cavalier, as he comes from the menége. Does any body wait that brought this card?

Serv. Lord Trinket's servant is in the hall, madam.

Lady F. My compliments, and I shall be glad to see his lordship — Where is Miss Russet?

Serv. In her own chamber, madam.

Lady F. What is she doing?

Serv. Writing, I believe, madam.

Lady F. Oh ridiculous! — scribbling to that Oakly, I suppose. — (*Apart.*) — Let her know, I should be glad of her company here. — [*Exit Serv. L.H.*] — It is a mighty troublesome thing to manage a simple girl, that knows nothing of the world. Harriot, like all other girls, is foolishly fond of this young fellow of her own choosing, her first love; that is to say, the first man that is particularly civil; and the first air of consequence which a young lady gives herself. Poor silly soul! — But Oakly must not have her, positively. A match with Lord Trinket will add to the dignity of the family. I must bring her into it. But here she comes.

Enter HARRIOT, L.H.

Well, Harriot, still in the pouts! nay, pr'ythee, my dear little runaway girl, be more cheerful! your everlasting melancholy puts me into the vapours.

Har. Dear madam, excuse me. How can I be cheerful in my present situation? I know my father's temper so well, that I am sure this step of mine must almost distract him. I sometimes wish that I had remained in the country, let what would have been the consequence.

Lady F. Why, it is a naughty child, that's certain ; but it need not be so uneasy about papa, as you know that I wrote, by last night's post, to acquaint him that his little lost sheep was safe, and that you were ready to obey his commands in every particular, except marrying that oaf, Sir Harry Beagle.—Lord ! lord ! what a difference there is between a country and a town education ! Why, a London lass would have jumped out of a window into a gallant's arms, and without thinking of her father, unless it were to have drawn a few bills on him, been a hundred miles off in nine or ten hours, or perhaps out of the kingdom in twenty-four.

Har. I fear I have already been too precipitate. I tremble for the consequences.

Lady F. I swear, child, you are a downright prude. Your way of talking gives me the spleen : so full of affection, and duty, and virtue, 'tis just like a funeral sermon. And yet, pretty soul ! it can love.—Well, I wonder at your taste ; a sneaking, simple gentleman, without a title ! and when to my knowledge you might have a man of quality to-morrow.

Har. Perhaps so. Your ladyship must excuse me, but many a man of quality would make me miserable.

Lady F. Indeed, my dear, these antediluvian notions will never do now-a-days ; and at the same time too, those little wicked eyes of your's speak a very different language. Indeed you have fine eyes, child ! and they have made fine work with Lord Trinket.

Har. Lord Trinket ! *(Contemptuously.)*

Lady F. Yes, Lord Trinket ; you know it as well as I do ; and yet you ill-natured thing, you will not vouchsafe him a single smile. But you must give the poor soul a little encouragement, pr'ythee do.

Har. Indeed I can't, madam, for of all mankind, Lord Trinket is my aversion.

Lady F. Why so, child ? He is counted a well-bred, sensible, young fellow, and the women all think him handsome.

Har. Yes, he is just polite enough to be able to be very unmanly, with a great deal of good breeding ;

is just handsome enough to make him most *excessively* vain of his person; and has just reflection enough to finish him for a coxcomb; qualifications which are all very common among those whom your ladyship calls men of quality.

Lady F. A satirist too! Indeed, my dear, this affectation sits very awkwardly upon you. There will be a superiority in the behaviour of persons of fashion.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Har. A superiority, indeed! for his lordship always behaves with so much insolent familiarity, that I should almost imagine he was soliciting me for other favours, rather than to pass my whole life with him.

Lady F. Innocent freedoms child, which every fine woman expects to be taken with her, as an acknowledgment of her beauty.

Har. They are freedoms which, I think, no innocent woman can allow.

Lady F. Romantic to the last degree!—Why, you are in the country still, Harriot!

Enter a SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. My lord Trinket, madam. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Lady F. I swear now, I have a good mind to tell him all that you have said.

Enter LORD TRINKET, L.H. in boots, &c. as from the Riding-house.

Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant.

Lord T. Your ladyship does me too much honour. Here I am, *en bottine*, as you see; just come from the *menéage*.

Lady F. Your lordship is always agreeable in every dress.

Lord T. Vastly obliging Lady Free love. Miss Russet, I am your slave. I declare it makes me quite happy to find you together. 'Pon honour, ma'am,—(*To Harriot.*)—I begin to conceive great hopes of you; and as for you, Lady Free love, I cannot sufficiently

commend your assiduity with your fair pupil. She was before possessed of every grace that nature could bestow on her, and nobody is so well qualified as your ladyship to give her the bon ton.

Har. Compliment and contempt all in a breath!—My lord, I am obliged to you. But, waving my acknowledgments, give me leave to ask your lordship, whether nature and the bon ton, as you call it, are so different, that we must give up one in order to obtain the other.

Lord T. Totally opposite, madam.—(*Crosses to centre.*)—The chief aim of the bon ton is to render persons of family different from the vulgar, for whom indeed, nature serves very well. For this reason, it has, at various times, been ungentle to see, to hear, to walk, to be in good health, and to have twenty other horrible perfections of nature. Nature, indeed, may do very well sometimes. It made you, for instance, and it then made something very lovely; and if you would suffer us of quality to give you the ton, you would be absolutely divine: but, now—me—madam—me—nature never made such a thing as me.

Har. Why, indeed, I think your lordship has very few obligations to her.

Lord T. Then you really think it's all my own? I declare now that is a mighty genteel compliment: nay, if you begin to flatter already, you improve apace. 'Pon honour, Lady Freelove, I believe we shall make something of her at last.

Lady F. No doubt on't. It is in your lordship's power to make her a complete woman of fashion at once.

Lord T. Hum! Why, ay—

Har. Your lordship must excuse me. I am of a very tasteless disposition. I shall never bear to be carried out of nature.

Lady F. You are out of nature now, Harriot! I am sure no woman but yourself ever objected to being out of nature among persons of quality. Would you believe my lord, here she has been a whole week in town, and would never suffer me to introduce her to a rout,

an assembly, a concert, or even to court, or the opera ; nay, would hardly so much as mix with a living soul that has visited me.

Lord T. No wonder, madam, you do not adopt the manners of persons of fashion, when you will not even honour them with your company. Were you to make one in our little coteries, we should soon make you sick of the boors and bumpkins of the horrid country. By-the-by, I met a monster at the riding-house this morning, who gave me some intelligence that will surprise you, concerning your family.

Har. What intelligence ?

Lady F. Who was this monster, as your lordship calls him ?—A curiosity, I dare say.

Lord T. This monster, madam, was formerly my head-groom, and had the care of all my running-horses ; but growing most abominably surly and extravagant, as you know all these fellows do, I turned him off ; and ever since my brother, Slouch Trinket, has had the care of my stud, rides all my principal matches himself, and—

Har. Dear, my lord, don't talk of your groom and your brother, but tell me the news. Do you know any thing of my father ?

Lord T. Your father, madam, is now in town. This fellow, you must know, is now groom to Sir Harry Beagle, your sweet rural swain, and informed me that his master and your father were running all over the town in quest of you ; and that he himself had orders to inquire after you : for which reason, I suppose he came to the riding-house stable to look after a horse, thinking it, to be sure, a very likely place to meet you. Your father, perhaps, is gone to seek you at the Tower, or Westminster Abbey, which is all the idea he has of London ; and your faithful lover is probably cheapening a hunter, and drinking strong beer, at the Horse and Jockey, in Smithfield.

Lady F. The whole set admirably disposed of !

Har. Did not your lordship inform him where I was.

Lord T. Not I, 'pon honour, madam; that I left to their own ingenuity to discover.

Lady F. And pray, my lord, where, in this town, have this polite company bestowed themselves?

Lord T. They lodge, madam, of all places in the world, at the Bull and Gate Inn, in Holborn.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha!—The Bull and Gate!—incomparable!—What, have they brought any hay or cattle to town?

Lord T. Very well, Lady Freelove, very well, indeed! There they are, like so many graziers; and there it seems they have learned that this lady is certainly in London.

Har. Do—(*Crosses to centre.*)—dear madam, send a card directly to my father, informing him where I am, and that your ladyship would be glad to see him here. For my part, I dare not venture into his presence, till you have in some measure pacified him; but for heaven's sake, desire him not to bring that wretched fellow along with him.

Lord T. Wretched fellow!—O ho!—Courage, Milor Trinket! (*Aside.*)

Lady F. I'll send immediately. Who's there?

Re-enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. (*Apart to Lady F.*) Sir Harry Beagle is below, madam.

Lady F. (*Apart to Servant.*) I am not at home. Have they let him in?

Serv. Yes, madam.

Lady F. How abominably unlucky this is! Well, then show him into my dressing-room, I will come to him there. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*]

Lord T. Lady Freelove! no engagement, I hope? We wont part with you, 'pon honour.

Lady F. The worst engagement in the world. A pair of musty old prudes! Lady Formal and Miss Prate.

Lord T. O the beldames! As nauseous as ipecacuanha, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Lud, lud ! what shall I do with them ? why do these foolish women come troubling me now ? I must wait on them in the dressing-room, and you must excuse the card, Harriot, till they are gone ; I'll dispatch them as soon as I can, but heaven knows when I shall get rid of them, for they are both everlasting gossips ! though the words come from her ladyship one by one, like drops from a still, while the other tiresome woman overwhelms us with a flood of impertinence. Harriot, you'll entertain his lordship till I return.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Lord T. Gone !—'Pon honour, I am not sorry for the coming in of these old tabbies, and am much obliged to her ladyship for leaving us to such an agreeable tête-a-tête:

Har. Your lordship will find me extremely bad company.

Lord T. Not in the least, my dear ! We'll entertain ourselves one way or other, I'll warrant you.—'Egad, I think it a mighty good opportunity to establish a better acquaintance with you.

Har. I don't understand you.

Lord T. No ?—Why then I'll speak plainer.—(*Pausing and looking her full in the face.*)—You are an amazing fine creature, 'pon honour.

Har. If this be your lordship's polite conversation, I shall leave you to amuse yourself in soliloquy. (*Going.*)

Lord T. No, no, no, madam, that must not be.—(*Stopping her.*)—This place, my passion, the opportunity, all conspire—

Har. How, sir ! you don't intend to do me any violence ?

Lord T. 'Pon honour, ma'am, it will be doing great violence to myself, if I do not. You must excuse me. (*Struggling with her.*)

Har. Help ! help ! murder ! help !

Lord T. Your yelping will signify nothing—nobody will come. (*Struggling.*)

Har. For heaven's sake !—Sir !—My lord—

(*Noise within.*)

Lord T. Plague on't, what a noise!—Then I must be quick. *(Still struggling.)*

Har. Help! murder! help! help!

Enter CHARLES, hastily, L.H.

Charles. What do I hear? My Harriot's voice calling for help!—Ha!—*(Seeing them.)*—Is it possible?—Turk, ruffian! I'll find you employment.

(Drawing.)

Lord T. You are a most impertinent scoundrel, and I'll whip you through the lungs, 'pon honour.

(They fight.—Harriot runs out, screaming help, &c.)

Re enter LADY FREELOVE, with SIR HARRY BEAGLE and Servants, L.H.

Lady F. How's this?—Swords drawn in my house!—Part them—*(They are parted.)*—This is the most impudent thing—

Lord T. Well, rascal, I shall find a time; I know you, sir!

Charles. The sooner the better: I know your lordship too.

Sir H. I faith, madam.—*(To Lady Freelove.)*—We had like to have been in at the death.

Lady F. What is all this? Pray, sir, what is the meaning of your coming hither to raise this disturbance? Do you take my house for a brothel?

(To Charles.)

Charles. Not I, indeed, madam; but I believe his lordship does.

Lord T. Impudent scoundrel!

Lady F. Your conversation, sir, is as insolent as your behaviour. Who are you? What brought you here?

Charles. I am one, madam; always ready to draw my sword in defence of innocence in distress, and more especially in the cause of that lady I delivered from his lordship's fury: in search of whom I troubled your ladyship's house.

Lady F. Her lover, I suppose ; or what ?

Charles. At your ladyship's service ; though not quite so violent in my passion as his lordship there.

Lord T. Impertinent rascal !

Lady F. You shall be made to repent of this insolence.

Lord T. Your ladyship may leave that to me.

Charles. Ha, ha !

Sir H. But, pray what is become of the lady all this while ? Why, Lady Freelove, you told me she was not here ; and i'faith, I was just drawing off another way, if I had not heard the view-halloo.

Lady F. You shall see her immediately, sir ! Who's there ?

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Where is Miss Russet ?

Serv. Gone out, madam.

Lady F. Gone out ?—Where ?

Serv. I don't know, madam : but she ran down the back stairs, crying for help, crossed the servant's hall in tears, and took a chair at the door.

Lady F. Blockheads ! to let her go out in a chair alone !—Go and inquire after her immediately.

[*Exit Servant, L.H.*

Sir H. Gone !—When I had just run her down, and is the little puss stole away at last ?

Lady F. Sir, if you will walk in—(*To Sir H.*)—with his lordship and me, perhaps you may hear some tidings of her : though it is most probable she may be gone to her father. I don't know any other friend she has in town.

Charles. I am heartily glad she is gone. She is safer any where than in this house.

Lady F. Mighty well, sir !—My lord, Sir Harry,—I attend you.

Lord T. You shall hear from me, sir ! (*To Charles.*)

Charles. Very well, my lord.

Sir H. Stole away !—plague on't—stole away !

[*Exeunt Sir Harry and Lord Trinket, R.H.*

Lady F. Before I follow the company, give me leave to tell you, sir, that your behaviour here has been so extraordinary.—

Charles. My treatment here, madam, has indeed been very extraordinary.

Lady F. Indeed!—Well, no matter—permit me to acquaint you, sir, that there lies your way out, and that the greatest favour you can do me, is to leave the house immediately.

Charles. That your ladyship may depend on. Since you have put Miss Russet to flight, you may be sure of not being troubled with my company. I'll after her immediately.

Lady F. If she has any regard for her reputation, she'll never put herself into such hands as yours.

Charles. O, madam, there can be no doubt of her regard for that, by her leaving your ladyship.

Lady F. Leave my house.

Charles. Directly—a charming house; and a charming lady of the house too!—Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Vulgar fellow!

Charles. Fine lady!

[*Exeunt ; Lady F. R.H. and Charles, L.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Lady Freelove's House.*

Enter LADY FREELOVE and LORD TRINKET, R.H.

Lord T. Doucement, doucement, my dear Lady Freelove!—Excuse me, I meant no harm, 'pon honour!

Lady F. Indeed indeed, my Lord Trinket, this is absolutely intolerable! What, to offer rudeness to a young lady in my house! What will the world say of it?

Lord T. Just what the world pleases.—It does not

signify a doit what they say.—However, I ask pardon ; but, 'egad, I thought it was the best way.

Lady F. For shame, for shame, my lord ! I am quite hurt at your want of discretion ; and as this is rather an ugly affair in regard to me as well as your lordship, and may make some noise, I think it absolutely necessary, merely to save appearances, that you should wait on her father, palliate matters as well as you can, and make a formal repetition of your proposal of marriage.

Lord T. Your ladyship is perfectly in the right.—You are quite *au fait* of the affair. It shall be done immediately, and then your reputation will be safe, and my conduct justified to all the world. But should the old rustic continue as stubborn as his daughter, your ladyship, I hope, has no objections to my being a little *rusee*, for I must have her, 'pon honour.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Captain O'Cutter, to wait on your ladyship.

Lady F. O the hideous fellow ! the Irish sailor-man for whom I prevailed on your lordship to get the post of regulating captain. I suppose he is come to load me with his odious thanks. I wont be troubled with him now.

Lord T. Let him in, by all means. He is the best creature to laugh at in nature. He is a perfect sea-monster, and always looks and talks as if he was upon deck. Besides, a thought strikes me—he may be of use.

Lady F. Well—send the creature up then.—[*Exit Servant, L.H.*.]—But what fine thought is this ?

Lord T. A *coup de maître*, 'pon honour ! I intend—but, hush ! here the porpus comes.

Enter CAPTAIN O'CUTTER, L.H.

Lady F. Captain, your humble servant ! I am very glad to see you.

O'Cut. I am much obliged to you, my lady ! Upon my conscience, the wind favours me at all points. I had no sooner got under weigh, to tank your ladyship, but I have borne down upon my noble friend his lordship too. I hope your lordship's well ?

Lord T. Very well, I thank you, captain.—But you seem to be hurt in the service : what is the meaning of that patch over your right eye ?

O'Cut. Some advanced wages from my new post, my lord ! This pressing is hot work, though it entitles us to smart money.

Lady F. And pray in what perilous adventure did you get that scar, captain ?

O'Cut. Quite out of my element, indeed, my lady. I got it in an engagement by land. A day or two ago, I spied three stout fellows, belonging to a merchantman. They made down Wapping. I immediately gave my lads the signal to chase, and we bore down right upon them. They tacked, and lay to—We gave them a thundering broadside, which they resaved like men : and one of them made use of small arms, which carried off the weathermost corner of Ned Gage's hat ; so I immediately stood in with him, and raked him, but resaved a wound on my starboard eye, from the stock of the pistol. However we took them all, and they now lie under the hatches, with fifty more aboard a tender off the Tower.

Lord T. Well done, noble captain !—But however you will soon have better employment, for I think the next step to your present post, is commonly a ship.

O'Cut. The sooner the better, my lord ! Honest Terence O'Cutter shall never flinch, I warrant you ; and has had as much sea-sarvice as any man in the navy.

Lord T. You may depend on my good offices, captain ! But in the mean time, it is in your power to do me a favour.

O'Cut. A favour, my lord ?—your lordship does me honour. I would go round the world, from one end to

the other, by day or by night, to sarve your lordship, or my good lady here.

Lord T. Dear madam, the luckiest thought in nature!—(*Apart to Lady F.*)—The favour I have to ask of you, captain, need not carry you so far out of your way. The whole affair is, that there are a couple of impudent fellows at an inn in Holborn, who have affronted me, and you would oblige me infinitely, by pressing them into his majesty's service.

Lady F. Now I understand—Admirable! (*Apart.*)

O'Cut. With all my heart, my lord, and tank you too, 'fai. But, bye-the-by, I hope they are not house-keepers, or freemen of the city. There's the devil to pay in meddling with them. They boder one so about liberty, and property, and stuff.—It was but t'other day, that Jack Trowser was carried before my lord mayor, and lost above a twelvemonth's pay for nothing at all at all.

Lord T. I'll take care you shall be brought into no trouble. These fellows were formerly my grooms. If you'll call on me in the morning, I'll go with you to the place.

O'Cut. I'll be with your lordship, and bring with me four or five as pretty boys as you'll wish to clap your two lucking eyes upon of a summer's day.

Lord T. I am much obliged to you.—But, captain, I have another little favour to beg of you.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul I'll do it.

Lord T. What, before you know it?

O'Cut. Fore and aft, my lord!

Lord T. A gentleman has offended me in a point of honour—

O'Cut. Cut his troat!

Lord T. Will you carry him a letter from me?

O'Cut. Indeed and I will :—and I'll take you in tow too; and you shall engage him yard-arm and yard-arm.

Lord T. Why then, captain, you'll come a little earlier to-morrow morning than you proposed, that you may attend him with my billet, before you proceed on the other affair.

O'Cut. Never fear it, my lord—Your sarvant!—My ladyship your humble sarvant!

Lady F. Captain, yours—Pray give my service to my friend Mrs. O'Cutter. How does she do?

O'Cut. I tank your ladyship's axing—The dear creature is purely tight and well.

Lord T. How many children have you, captain?

O'Cut. Four, and please your lordship, and another upon the stocks.

Lord T. When it is launched, I hope to be at the christening.—I'll stand godfather, captain.

O'Cut. Your lordship's very good.

Lord T. Well, you'll come to-morrow.

O'Cut. Ay, my lord, and every day next week.—Little Terence O'Cu'ter never fails, fait, when a troat is to be cut.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! But sure you don't intend to ship off both her father and her country lover for the Indies?

Lord T. O no! Only let them contemplate the inside of a ship, for a day or two; and in the mean while measures may be concerted to carry off the girl.

Re-enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Mrs. Oakly, madam, is at the door, in her chariot, and desires to have the honour of speaking to your ladyship on particular business.

Lord T. Mrs. Oakly! what can that jealous-pated woman want with you?

Lady F. No matter what.—I hate her mortally.—Let her in.

[*Exit Servant, L.H.*]

Lord T. What wind blows her hither?

Lady F. A wind that must blow us some good.

Lord T. How?—I was amazed you chose to see her.

Lady F. How can you be so slow of apprehension!—She comes, you may be sure, on some occasion relating to this girl: in order to assist young Oakly, perhaps, to sooth me, and gain intelligence, and so for-

ward the match ; but I'll forbid the banns, I warrant you.—Whatever she wants, I'll draw some sweet mischief out of it.—But away ! away !—I think I hear her—slip down the back stairs—or—stay, now I think on't, go out this way—meet her—and be sure to make her a very respectful bow as you go out.

Lord T. Hush ! here she is !

*Enter MRS. OAKLY, L.H. (Lord Trinket bows,
and Exit, L.H.)*

Mrs. O. I beg pardon, for giving your ladyship this trouble.

Lady F. I am always glad of the honour of seeing Mrs. Oakly.

Mrs. O. There is a letter, madam, just come from the country, which has occasioned some alarm in our family. It comes from Mr. Russet—

Lady F. Mr. Russet !

Mrs. O. Yes, from Mr. Russet, madam ; and is chiefly concerning his daughter. As she has the honour of being related to your ladyship, I took the liberty of waiting on you.

Lady F. She is, indeed, as you say, madam, a relation of mine ; but, after what has happened, I scarce know how to acknowledge her.

Mrs. O. Has she been so much to blame then ?

Lady F. So much, madam !—Only judge for yourself.—Though she had been so indiscreet, not to say indecent in her conduct, as to elope from her father, I was in hopes to have hushed up that matter, for the honour of our family.—But she has run away from me too, madam :—went off in the most abrupt manner, not an hour ago.

Mrs. O. You surprise me. Indeed, her father, by his letter, seems apprehensive of the worst consequences.—But does your ladyship imagine any harm has happened ?

Lady F. I can't tell—I hope not—But indeed

she's a strange girl. You know, madam, young women can't be too cautious in their conduct. She is, I am sorry to declare it, a very dangerous person to take into a family.

Mrs. O. Indeed! (*Alarmed.*)

Lady F. If I was to say all I know—

Mrs. O. Why sure your ladyship knows of nothing that has been carried on clandestinely between her and Mr. Oakly? (*In disorder.*)

Lady F. Mr. Oakly?

Mrs. O. Mr. Oakly—no, not Mr. Oakly—that is, not my husband—I don't mean him—not him but his nephew—young Mr. Oakly.

Lady F. Jealous of her husband! So, so! now I know my game. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. O. But pray, madam, give me leave to ask, was there any thing very particular in her conduct while she was in your ladyship's house?

Lady F. Why, really, considering she was here scarce a week, her behaviour was rather mysterious—letters and messages, to and fro, between her and I don't know who.—I suppose you know that Mr. Oakly's nephew has been here, madam?

Mrs. O. I was not sure of it. Has he been to wait on your ladyship on this occasion?

Lady F. To wait on me!—The expression is much too polite for the nature of the visit.—My Lord Trinket, the nobleman whom you met as you came in, had, you must know, madam, some thoughts of my niece, and, as it would have been an advantageous match, I was glad of it: but I believe, after what he has been witness to this morning, he will drop all thoughts of it.

Mrs. O. I am sorry that any relation of mine should so far forget himself—

Lady F. It's no matter—his behaviour indeed, as well as the young lady's, was pretty extraordinary—and yet, after all, I don't believe he is the object of her affections.

Mrs. O. Ha!

(*Much alarmed.*)

Lady F. She has certainly an attachment somewhere, a strong one ; but his lordship, who was present all the time, was convinced, as well as myself, that Mr. Oakly's nephew was rather a convenient friend, a kind of go-between, than the lover.—Bless me, madam, you change colour !—you seem uneasy ! What's the matter ?

Mrs. O. Nothing, madam—nothing—a little shocked that my husband should behave so.

Lady F. Your husband, madam !

Mrs. O. His nephew, I mean.—His unpardonable rudeness—But I am not well—I am sorry I have given your ladyship so much trouble—I'll take my leave.

Lady F. I declare, madam, you frighten me. Your being so visibly affected makes me quite uneasy. I hope I have not said any thing—I really don't believe your husband is in fault. Men, to be sure, allow themselves strange liberties—But I think, nay, I am sure, it cannot be so—It is impossible ! Don't let what I have said have any effect on you.

Mrs. O. No, it has not—I have no idea of such a thing.—Your ladyship's most obedient—(*Going, returns.*)—But sure, madam, you have not heard—or don't know any thing—

Lady F. Come, come, Mrs. Oakly, I see how it is, and it would not be kind to say all I know. I dare not tell you what I have heard. Only be on your guard—there can be no harm in that. Do you be against giving the girl any countenance, and see what effect it has.

Mrs. O. I will—I am much obliged—But does it appear to your ladyship, then, that Mr. Oakly—

Lady F. No, not at all—nothing in't, I dare say—I would not create uneasiness in a family—but I am a woman myself, have been married, and can't help feeling for you.—But don't be uneasy ; there's nothing in't I dare say.

Mrs. O. I think so,—Your ladyship's humble servant.

Lady F. Your servant, madam.—Pray don't be alarmed : I must insist on your not making yourself uneasy.

Mrs. O. Not at all alarmed—not in the least uneasy—your most obedient. [Exit, L.H.]

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! There she goes, brimfull of anger and jealousy, to vent it all on her husband.—Mercy on the poor man!

Re-enter LORD TRINKET, L.H.S.E.

Bless me, my lord, I thought you was gone!

Lord T. Only into the next room. My curiosity would not let me stir a step further. I heard it all, and was never more diverted in my life, 'pon honour. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. How the silly creature took it.—Ha, ha, ha!

Lord T. Ha, ha, ha!—My dear lady Freelove, you have a deal of ingenuity, a deal of esprit, 'pon honour.

Lady F. A little shell thrown into the enemy's works, that's all.

Both. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. But I must leave you—I have twenty visits to pay. You'll let me know how you succeed in your secret expedition.

Lord T. That you may depend on.

Lady F. Remember, then, that to-morrow morning I expect to see you. At present, your lordship will excuse me. [Exit Lord T. R.H. Lady F. L.H.]

SCENE II.—*Mr. Oakly's house.*

Enter HARRIOT, L.H. following WILLIAM.

Har. Not at home! Are you sure that Mrs. Oakly is not at home, sir?

Wil. She is just gone out, madam.

Har. I have something of consequence—If you will give me leave, sir, I will wait till she returns.

Wil. You would not see her, if you did, madam. She has given positive orders not to be interrupted with any company to-day.

Har. Sure, sir, if you was to let her know that I had particular business——

Wil. I should not dare to trouble her, indeed, madam.

Har. How unfortunate this is! What can I do?—Pray, sir, can I see Mr. Oakly, then?

Wil. Yes, madam: I'll acquaint my master, if you please.

Har. Pray do, sir.

Wil. Will you favour me with your name, madam?

Har. Be pleased, sir, to let him know that a lady desires to speak with him.

Wil. I shall, madam. [Exit, R.H.]

Har. I wish I could have seen Mrs. Oakly. What an unhappy situation am I reduced to by my father's obstinate perseverance to force me into a marriage which my soul abhors.

Enter OAKLY, R.H.

Oak. (*At entering.*) Where is this lady? (*Seeing her.*)—Bless me, Miss Russet, is it you?—Was ever any thing so unlucky—(*Aside.*)—Is it possible, madam, that I see you here?

Har. It is too true, sir; and the occasion on which I am now to trouble you, is so much in need of an apology, that—

Oak. Pray make none, madam.—If my wife should return before I get her out of the house again! (*Aside.*)

Har. I dare say, sir, you are not quite a stranger to the attachment your nephew has professed to me.

Oak. I am not, madam.—I hope Charles has not been guilty of any baseness towards you. If he has, I'll never see his face again.

Har. I have no cause to accuse him—But—

Oak. But what, madam! Pray be quick?—The very person in the world I would not have seen!

(*Aside.*)

Har. You seem uneasy, sir!

Oak. No, nothing at all—Pray go on, madam.

Har. I am at present, sir, through a concurrence of strange accidents, in a very unfortunate situation, and do not know what will become of me without your assistance.

Oak. I'll do every thing in my power to serve you. I know of your leaving your father, by a letter we have had from him. Pray let me know the rest of your story.

Har. My story, sir, is very short. When I left my father's, I came immediately to London, and took refuge with a relation ; where, instead of meeting with the protection I expected, I was alarmed with the most infamous designs upon my honour. It is not an hour ago since your nephew rescued me from the attempts of a villain. I tremble to think that I left him actually engaged in a duel.

Oak. He is very safe. He has just sent home the chariot, from the St. Alban's tavern, where he dines to-day.—But what are your commands for me, madam ?

Har. The favour, sir, I would now request of you is, that you would suffer me to remain, for a few days, in your house.

Oak. Madam !

Har. And that, in the mean time, you will use your utmost endeavours to reconcile me to my father, without his forcing me into a marriage with Sir Harry Beagle.

Oak. This is the most perplexing situation ! Why did not Charles take care to bestow you properly ?

Har. It is most probable, sir, that I should not have consented to such a measure myself. The world is but too apt to censure, even without a cause : and if you are so kind as to admit me into your house, I must desire not to consider Mr. Oakly in any other light than as your nephew.

Oak. What an unlucky circumstance !—Upon my soul, madam, I would do any thing to serve you—but being in my house creates a difficulty, that—

Har. I hope, sir, you do not doubt the truth of what I have told you ?

Oak. I religiously believe every tittle of it, madam ; but I have particular family considerations, that——

Har. Sure, sir, you cannot suspect me to be base enough to form any connexions in your family contrary to your inclinations, while I am living in your house !

Oak. Such connexions, madam, would do me and all my family great honour. I never dreamt of any scruples on that account.—What can I do ?—Let me see—let me see—suppose
(*Pausing.*)

*Enter MRS. OAKLY through M.D. in a Capuchin,
Tippet, &c.*

Mrs. O. I am sure I heard the voice of a woman, conversing with my husband—Ha ! (*Seeing Harriot.*) It is so indeed ! Let me contain myself—I'll listen.

(*Aside.*)

Har. I see, sir, you are not inclined to serve me—good heaven ! what am I reserved to ?—Why, why did I leave my father's house, to expose myself to greater distresses ?
(*Ready to weep.*)

Oak. I would do any thing for your sake, indeed I would. So pray be comforted, and I'll think of some proper place to bestow you in.

Mrs. O. So ! so !

Har. What place can be so proper as your own house ?

Oak. My dear madam, I—I—

Mrs. O. My dear madam !—Mighty well !—(*Aside.*)

Oak. Hush !—hark !—what noise ?—no—nothing. But I'll be plain with you, madam ; we may be interrupted.—The family consideration I hinted at is nothing else than my wife. She is a little unhappy in her temper, madam ;—and if you were to be admitted into the house, I don't know what would be the consequence.

Mrs. O. Very fine !
(*Aside.*)

Har. My behaviour, sir !—

Oak. My dear life, it would be impossible for you to behave in such a manner as not to give her suspicion.

Har. But if your nephew, sir, took every thing upon himself—

Oak. Still that would not do, madam.—Why, this very morning, when the letter came from your father, though I positively denied any knowledge of it, and Charles owned it, yet it was almost impossible to pacify her.

Har. What shall I do?—What will become of me?

Oak. Why, lookye, my dear madam, since my wife is so strong an objection, it is absolutely impossible for me to take you into the house. Nay, if I had not known she was gone out, just before you came, I should be uneasy at your being here, even now. So we must manage as well as we can. I'll take a private lodging for you, a little way off, unknown to Charles, or my wife, or any body; and if Mrs. Oakly should discover it at last, why, the whole matter will light upon Charles, you know.

Mrs. O. Upon Charles!

Har. How unhappy is my situation!—(*Weeping.*)—I am ruined for ever.

Oak. Ruined! Not at all. Such a thing as this has happened to many a young lady before you, and all has been well again. Keep up your spirits! I'll contrive, if I possibly can, to visit you every day.

Mrs. O. (*Advances.*) Will you so? O, Mr. Oakly! have I discovered you at last? I'll visit you, indeed! And you, my dear madam, I'll—

Har. Madam, I don't understand—

Mrs. O. I understand the whole affair, and have understood it for some time past. You shall have a private lodging, miss! It is the fittest place for you, I believe. How dare you look me in the face?

Oak. For heaven's sake, my love, don't be so violent. You are quite wrong in this affair—you don't know who you are talking to. This lady is a person of fashion.

Mrs. O. Fine fashion, indeed! to seduce other women's husbands!

Har. Dear madam, how can you imagine—

Oak. I tell you, my dear, this is the young lady that Charles—

Mrs. O. Mighty well! but that wont do, sir!—Did not I hear you lay the whole intrigue together?—Did not I hear your fine plot of throwing all the blame upon Charles?—

Oak. Nay, be cool a moment. You must know, my dear, that the letter which came this morning related to this lady—

Mrs. O. I know it.

Oak. And since that, it seems, Charles has been so fortunate as to—

Mrs. O. O, you deceitful man!—That trick is too stale to pass again with me. It is plain now what you meant by your proposing to take her into the house this morning. But the gentlewoman could introduce herself, I see.

Oak. Fie! fie! my dear, she came on purpose to inquire for you.

Mrs. O. For me!—better and better!—Did not she watch her opportunity, and come to you just as I went out? But I am obliged to you for your visit, madam. It is sufficiently paid. Pray don't let me detain you.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Oak. For shame, for shame, Mrs. Oakly! How can you be so absurd? Is this proper behaviour to a lady of her character?

Mrs. O. I have heard her character. Go, my fine, runaway madam! Now you have eloped from your family, and run away from your aunt!—Go!—You sha'n't stay here, I promise you.

Oak. Pr'ythee be quiet. You don't know what you are doing. She shall stay.

Mrs. O. She sha'n't stay a minute.

Oak. She shall stay a minute, an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year!—'Sdeath, madam, she shall stay for ever, if I choose it.

Mrs. O. How!

Har. For heaven's sake, sir, let me go. I am frightened to death.

Oak. Don't be afraid, madam. She shall stay, I insist upon it.

Rus. (*Within.*) I tell you, sir, I will go up. I am sure the lady is here, and nothing shall hinder me.

Har. O, my father! my father! (*Faints.*)

Oak. Sec, she faints!—(*Catches her.*)—Ring the bell! Who's there?

Mrs. O. What!—take her into your arms, too!—I have no patience.

Enter RUSSET, L.H.

Rus. Where is this—ha! fainting!—(*Runs to her.*) O, my dear Harriot! my child, my child!

Oak. Your coming so abruptly shocked her spirits. But she revives. How do you do, madam?

Har. (*To Russet.*) O, sir!

Rus. O, my dear girl, how could you run away from your father, that loves you with such fondness? But I was sure I should find you here—

Mrs. O. There—therè!—sure he should find her here! Did I not tell you so?—Are not you a wicked man, to carry on such base underhand doings with a gentleman's daughter?

Rus. Let me tell you, sir, whatever you may think of the matter, I shall not easily put up with this behaviour. How durst you encourage my daughter to an elopement, and receive her in your house?

Mrs. O. There, mind that!—The thing is as plain as the light.

Oak. I tell you, you misunderstand—

Rus. Look you, Mr. Oakly, I shall expect satisfaction from your family for so gross an affront.—Zounds, sir, I am not to be used ill by any man in England.

Har. My dear sir, I can assure you—

Rus. Hold your tongue, girl! You'll put me in a passion.

Oak. Sir, this is all a mistake.

Rus. A mistake! Did not I find her in your house?

Oak. Upon my soul, she has not been in my house above—

Mrs. O. Did not I hear you say, you would take her a lodging,—a private lodging?

Oak. Yes, but that—

Rus. Has not this affair been carried on a long time, in spite of my teeth?

Oak. Sir, I never troubled myself—

Mrs. O. Never troubled yourself!—Did not you insist on her staying in the house, whether I would or no?

Oak. No.

Rus. Did not you send to meet her, when she came to town?

Oak. No.

Mrs. O. Did not you deceive me about the letter this morning?

Oak. No—no—no—I tell you, no.

Mrs. O. Yes—yes—yes—I tell you, yes.

Rus. Sha'n't I believe my own eyes?

Mrs. O. Sha'n't I believe my own ears?

Oak. I tell you, you are deceived.

Rus. Zounds, sir, I'll have satisfaction.

Mrs. O. I'll stop these fine doings, I warrant you.

Oak. 'Sdeath, you will not let me speak—and you are both alike, I think.—I wish you were married to one another with all my heart.

Mrs. O. Mighty well! mighty well!

Rus. I shall soon find a time to talk with you.

Oak. Find a time to talk! you have talked enough now for all your lives.

Mrs. O. Very fine! Come along, sir! Leave that lady with her father. Now she is in the properest hands.

[Exit, R.H.]

Oak. I wish I could leave you in his hands—(Going, returns.)—One word with you, sir!—The height of your passion, and Mrs. Oakly's strange misapprehension of this whole affair, makes it impossible to explain

matters to you at present. I will do it when you please, and how you please.

Rus. Yes, yes; I'll have satisfaction.—(*Crosses to R.H.*)—So, madam, I have found you, at last.—You have made a fine confusion here.

Har. I have indeed been the innocent cause of a great deal of confusion.

Rus. Innocent!—What business had you to be running hither, after—

Har. My dear sir, you misunderstand the whole affair. I have not been in this house half an hour.

Rus. Zounds, girl, don't put me in a passion!—You know I love you—but a lie puts me in a passion. But, come along—we'll leave this house directly.—(*Charles sings without, R.H.*)—Hey-day! what now?

Enter CHARLES, L.H. drunk.

*Charles. (Sings.) But my wine neither nurses nor babies can bring,
And a big-bellied bottle's a mighty good thing.*

What's here? a woman? Harriot! impossible!—My dearest, sweetest Harriot! I have been looking all over the town for you, and at last—when I was tired—and weary—and disappointed—why then, the honest major and I sat down together to drink your health in pint bumpers. (*Running to her.*)

Rus. Stand off!—How dare you take any liberty with my daughter before me?—Zounds, sir, I'll be the death of you!

Charles. Ha! 'Squire Russet, too!—You jolly old cock, how do you do?—But, Harriot! my dear girl!—(*Taking hold of her.*)—My life, my soul, my—

Rus. Let her go, sir—come away, Harriot!—Leave him this instant, or I'll tear you asunder.)

(*Pulling her.*)

Har. There needs no violence to tear me from a man who could disguise himself in such a gross manner, at a time when he knew I was in the utmost distress. [*Disengages herself, and exit with Rus. L.H.*]

Charles. Only hear me, sir—madam!—my dear Harriot—Mr. Russet—gone!—she's gone!—and, 'egad, in very ill-humour, and in very bad company:—I'll go after her—but hold!—I shall only make it worse—as I did—now I recollect—once before. How the devil came they here?—Who would have thought of finding her in my own house?—My head turns round with conjectures.—I believe I am drunk—very drunk—so, 'egad, I'll e'en go and sleep myself sober, and then inquire the meaning of all this. For

“I love Sue, and Sue loves me,” &c.

[Exit, R.H. singing.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE 1.—*Oakly's House.*

Enter CHARLES and MAJOR OAKLY, L.H.

Maj. O. Poor Charles! What a scene of confusion! I would give the world to have been there.

Charles. And I would give the world to have been any where else.—May wine be my poison, if ever I am drunk again! *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Maj. O. Ay, ay, so every man says the next morning.

Charles. Where, where can she be? Her father would hardly carry her back to Lady Freeclove's, and he has no house in town himself, nor Sir Harry—I don't know what to think—I'll go in search of her, though I don't know where to direct myself.

Enter WILLIAM, L.H.

Wil. A gentleman, sir, that calls himself Captain O'Cutter, desires to speak with you.

Charles. Don't trouble me—I'll see nobody—I'm not at home—

Wil. The gentleman says he has very particular business, and he must see you.

Charles. What's his name! Who did you say?

Wil. Captain O'Cutter, sir.

Charles. Captain O'Cutter! I never heard of him before. Do you know any thing of him, major?

Maj. O. Not I—But you hear he has particular business. I'll leave the room.

Charles. He can have no business that need be a secret to you.—Desire the captain to walk up.

[*Exit William, L.H.*]

Enter CAPTAIN O'CUTTER, L.H.

O'Cut. Jontlemen, your sarvant. Is either of your names Charles Oakly, Esq?

Charles. Charles Oakly, sir, is my name, if you have any business with it.

O'Cut. Avast, avast, my dear!—I have a little business with your name; but as I was to let nobody know it, I can't mention it till you clear the decks, fait.

(*Pointing to the Major.*)

Charles. This gentleman, sir, is my most intimate friend, and any thing that concerns me may be mentioned before him.

O'Cut. O, if he's your friend, my dear, we may do all above board. It's only about your deciding a deferance with my Lord Trinket. He wants to show you a little warm work; and, as I was steering this way, he desired me to fetch you this letter.

(*Gives a letter.*)

Maj. O. How, sir, a challenge!

O'Cut. Yes, fait, a challenge. I am to be his lordship's second; and if you are fond of a hot birth, and will come along with that jontleman, we'll all go to it together, and make a little line of battle a-head of our own, my dear.

Charles. (*Reads.*) Ha! what's this? This may be useful. (*Aside.*)

Maj. O. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.—A rare fellow this!—(*Aside.*)—Yes, yes, I'll meet all the good company. I'll be there in my waistcoat and pumps and take a morning's breathing with you. Are you very fond of fighting, sir?

O'Cut. Indeed and I am; I love it better than grog.

Maj. O. But pray, sir, how are you interested in this difference? Do you know what it is about?

O'Cut. O, the devil burn me, not I. What signifies what it's about, you know, so we do but tilt a little.

Maj. O. What fight and not know for what?

O'Cut. When the signal's out for engaging, what signifies talking?

Maj. O. I fancy, sir, a duel's a common breakfast with you. I'll warrant now, you have been engaged in many such affairs.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul, and I have: sea or land, it's all one to little Terence O'Cutter.—When I was last in Dublin, I fought one jontleman for cheating me out of a thousand pounds; I fought two of the Mermaid's crew about Sally Macguire; tree about politics; and one about the playhouse in Smock Alley. But upon my fait, since I am in England, I have done nothing at all, at all.

Charles. This is lucky—but my transport will discover me.—(*Aside.*)—Will you be so kind, sir,—(*To O'Cutter.*)—as to make my compliments to his lordship, and assure him, that I shall do myself the honour of waiting on him.

O'Cut. Indeed and I will.—Arrah, my dear, wont you come too? (*To Maj. Oakly.*)

Maj. O. Depend upon it, captain.—A very extraordinary fellow! (*Aside.*)

Charles. Now to get my intelligence.—(*Aside.*)—I think the time, sir, his lordship appoints in his letter, is—a—

O'Cut. You say right—Six o'clock.

Charles. And the place—a—a—is—I think, behind Montague House?

O'Cut. No, my dear!—Avast, by the ring in Hyde-park, 'fai!—I settled it there myself, for fare of interruption.

Charles. True, as you say, the ring in Hyde-park—I had forgot—Very well, I'll not fail you, sir.

O'Cut. Devil burn me, nor I. Upon my shoul, little Terence O'Cutter will see fair play, or he'll know the reason—And so, my dear, your sarvant.—You'll not forget to come, my dear? [*Exit, L.H.*]

Maj. O. Ha, ha, ha! What a fellow!—He loves fighting like a game cock.

Charles. O uncle, the luckiest thing in the world!

Maj. O. What, to have the chance of being run through the body? I desire no such good fortune.

Charles. Wish me joy, wish me joy! I have found her, my dear girl, my Harriot!—She is at an inn in Holborn, major!

Maj. O. Ay! how do you know?

Charles. Why, this dear, delightful, charming, blundering captain, has delivered me a wrong letter.

Maj. O. A wrong letter!

Charles. Yes, a letter from Lord Trinket to Lady Freeclove.

Maj. O. The devil! What are the contents?

Charles. The news I told you just now, that she's at an inn in Holborn; and, besides, an excuse from my lord, for not waiting on her ladyship this morning according to his promise, as he shall be entirely taken up with his design upon Harriot.

Maj. O. So! so!—A plot between the lord and the lady.

Charles. There! read, read, man!

(*Gives the letter.*)

Maj. O. (*Reading.*) Um—um—um—Very fine! what do you propose doing?

Charles. To go thither immediately.

Maj. O. Then you shall take me with you. Who

knows what his lordship's designs may be? I begin to suspect foul play.

Charles. No, no; pray mind your own business. If I find there is any need of your assistance, I'll send for you.

Maj. O. You'll manage this affair like a boy, now—Go on rashly, with noise, and bustle, and fury, and get yourself into another scrape.

Charles. No—no—Let me alone; I'll go incog.—Leave my chariot at some distance—proceed prudently, and take care of myself, I warrant you. I did not imagine that I should ever rejoice at receiving a challenge, but this is the most fortunate accident that could possibly have happened. B'ye, b'ye, uncle!

[*Exit hastily, L. II.*]

Maj. O. I don't half approve of this—and yet I can hardly suspect his lordship of any very deep designs neither.—Charles may easily outwit him.—Harkye, William! (*At seeing William at some distance.*)

Re-enter WILLIAM, R. II.

Wil. Sir!

Maj. O. Where's my brother?

Wil. In his study, sir.

Maj. O. Is he alone?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Maj. O. And how is he, William?

Wil. Pretty well, I believe, sir.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, but is he in good humour, or—

Wil. I never meddle in family affairs, not I, sir.

[*Exit, L. II.*]

Maj. O. Well said, William!—No bad hint for me, perhaps!—What a strange world we live in! no two people in it love one another better than my brother and sister, and yet the bitterest enemies could not torment each other more heartily.—However, yesterday, to give him his due, he behaved like a man. Keep it up, brother! keep it up! or it's all over with you. Since mischief is on foot, I'll even set it forward on all

sides. I'll in to him directly, read him one of my morning lectures, and persuade him, if I possibly can, to go out with me immediately; or work him to some open act of rebellion against the sovereign authority of his lady wife. Zounds, brother! rant, and roar, and rave, and turn the house out of the window. If I was a husband!—'Sdeath, what a pity it is that nobody knows how to manage a wife but a bachelor.

[*Exit, R. H.*]

SCENE II.—*The Bull and Gate Inn.*

Enter HARRIOT, L. H.

Har. What will become of me? Among all my distresses, I must confess that Charles's behaviour yesterday is not the least. So wild! so given up to excesses! And yet—I am ashamed to own it even to myself—I love him: and death itself shall not prevail on me to give my hand to Sir Harry—But here he comes! What shall I do with him?

Enter SIR HARRY BEAGLE, R. H.

Sir H. Your servant, miss.—What! not speak!—Bashful, mayhap—Why then I will—Lookye, miss, I am a man of few words—What signifies haggling? It looks just like a dealer.—What d'ye think of me for a husband?—I am a tight young fellow—sound wind and limb—free from all natural blemishes—Rum all over, damme.

Har. Sir, I don't understand you. Speak English, and I'll give you an answer.

Sir H. English! Why so I do—and good plain English too—What d'ye think of me for a husband?—That's English—c'nt it?—I know none of your French lingo, none of your parlyvoos, not I.—What d'ye think of me for a husband? The 'squire says you shall marry me.

Har. What shall I say to him? I had best be civil.—(*Aside.*)—I think, sir, you deserve a much better wife, and beg—

Sir H. Better! No, no, though you're so knowing, I'm not to be taken in so.—You're a fine thing—your points are all good.

Har. Sir Harry! Sincerity is above all ceremony. Excuse me, if I declare I never will be your wife.

Sir H. Hey! how! what! be off!—Why, it's a match, miss!—It's done and done on both sides.

Har. For heaven's sake, sir, withdraw your claim to me.—I never can be prevailed on—indeed I can't—

Sir H. What, make a match and then draw stakes! That's doing of nothing—Play or pay all the world over.

Har. I am determined not to marry you, at all events.

Sir H. But your father's determined you shall, miss,—so the odds are on my side—I am not quite sure of my horse, but I have the rider hollow.

Har. Your horse! sir, d'ye take me for—but I forgive you. I beseech you, come into my proposal: it will be better for us both in the end.

Sir H. I can't be off.

Har. Let me intreat you!

Sir H. I tell you, it's impossible!

Har. Pray, pray do, sir!

Sir H. I can't, damme.

Har. I beseech you!—(*Sir Harry whistles.*)—How! laughed at?

Sir H. Will you marry me, dear Ally, Ally Croker? (*Singing.*)

Har. Marry you! I had rather be married to a slave—a wretch! You! (*Walks about*)

Sir H. A fine going thing—she has a deal of foot—treads well upon her pasterns—goes above her ground—

Har. Peace, wretch! Do you talk to me as if I were your horse?

Sir H. Horse! Why not speak of my horse? If your fine ladies had half as many good qualities, they would be much better bargains.

Har. And if their wretches of husbands liked them

half so well as they do their horses, they would lead better lives.

Sir H. Mayhap so. But what signifies talking to you?—The 'squire shall know your tricks—he'll doctor you—I'll go and talk to him.

Har. Go any where, so that you go from me.

Sir H. He'll break you in;—if you wont go in a snaffle, you must be put in a curb.—He'll break you, damme. [Exit, R.H.

Har. A wretch!—But I was to blame to suffer his brutal behaviour to ruffle my temper—I could expect nothing else from him, and he is below my anger.

Enter RUSSET, R.H.

Rus. Are not you a sad girl? a perverse, stubborn, obstinate——

Har. My dear sir——

Rus. Lookye, Harriot, don't speak—you'll put me in a passion.—Will you have him? Answer me that. Why don't the girl speak?—Will you have him?

Har. Dearest sir, there is nothing in the world else——

Rus. Why there—there—lookye there!—Zounds, you shall have him—hussy, you shall have him; you shall marry him to-night. Did not you promise to receive him civilly? How came you to affront him?

Har. Sir, I did receive him very civilly; but his behaviour was so insolent and insupportable——

Ru. Insolent! Zounds, I'll blow his brains out!—Insolent to my dear Harriot! A rogue, a villain, a scoundrel! I'll—but it's a lie—I know it's a lie—he durst not behave insolent! Will you have him? Answer me that. Will you have him?—Zounds, you shall have him.

Har. If you have any love for me, sir——

Rus. Love for you! You know I love you; you know your poor fond father dotes on you to madness, I would not force you, if I did not love you!—Don't I

want you to be happy?—But I know what you would have. You want young Oakly, a rake-helly, drunken—

Har. Release me from Sir Harry, and if I ever marry against your consent, renounce me for ever.

Rus. I will renounce you, unless you'll have Sir Harry.

Har. Consider, my dear sir, you'll make me miserable. Absolve me from this hard command, and in every thing else it will be happiness to obey you.

Rus. You'll break my heart, Harriot, you'll break my heart. Make you miserable! Don't I want to make you happy? Is not he the richest man in the county? That will make you happy. Don't all the pale-faced girls in the country long to get him? And yet you are so perverse, and wayward, and stubborn—Zounds, you shall have him!

Har. For heaven's sake, sir—

Rus. Hold your tongue, Harriot! I'll hear none of your nonsense. You shall have him, I tell you, you shall have him; he shall marry you this very night;—I'll go for a license and a parson immediately. Zounds, why do I stand arguing with you? A'n't I your father? Have not I a right to dispose of you? You shall have him.

Har. Sir—

Rus. I wont hear a word. You shall have him.—

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Har. Sir, hear me—but one word! He will not hear me, and is gone to prepare for this odious marriage. I will die before I consent to it.

Enter CHARLES, in a frock, &c. L.H.

Ha! What do I see? (*Screaming.*)

Charles. Peace, my love! My dear life, make no noise!—I have been hovering about the house this hour. I just now saw your father and Sir Harry go out, and have seized this precious opportunity to throw myself at your feet.

Har. You have given yourself, sir, a great deal of needless trouble. I did not expect or hope for the favour of such a visit.

Charles. O, my Harriot, upbraid me, reproach me, do any thing but look and talk with that air of coldness and indifference. Let me, while their absence allows it, convey you from the brutal violence of a constrained marriage.

Har. No, I will wait the event, be it what it may. O, Charles, I am too much inclined—they sha'n't force me to marry Sir Harry. But your behaviour—not half an hour ago, my father reproached me with the looseness of your character. (*Weeping.*)

Charles. I see my folly, and am ashamed of it: you have reclaimed me, Harriot, on my soul you have. If all women were as attentive as yourself to the morals of their lovers, a libertine would be an uncommon character. But let me persuade you to leave this place while you may. Major Oakly will receive us at his house with pleasure. I am shocked at the thoughts of what your stay here may reserve you to.

Har. No, I am determined to remain. To leave my father again, to go off openly with a man of whose libertine character he has himself so lately been a witness, would justify his anger, and impeach my reputation.

Enter CHAMBERMAID, R.H.

Chamb. O law, ma'am! Such a terrible accident! As sure as I am here, there's a press gang has seized the two gemmim, and is carryi'g them away, thof so be as one an 'em says as how he's a knight and baronight, and that t'other's a squire and a housekeeper.

Har. Seized by a pressgang—impossible!

Charles. Oh, now the design comes out; but I'll baulk his lordship.

Chamb. Lack-a-daisy, ma'am, what can we do? There is master, and John Ostler, and Bootcatcher, all gone a'ter 'em. There is such an uproar as never was.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Har. If I thought this was your contrivance, sir, I would never speak to you again.

Charles. I would sooner die than be guilty of it!—This is Lord Trinket's doing, I am sure. I knew he had some scheme in agitation, by a letter I intercepted this morning.—(*Harriot screams.*)—Ha! here he comes. Nay, then, it's plain enough. Don't be frightened, my love! I'll protect you! But now I must desire you to follow my directions.

Enter LORD TRINKET, R.H.

Lord T. Now, madam. Plague on't, he here again! Nay, then,—(*Draws.*)—come, sir. You're unarmed I see. Give up the lady: give her up, I say, or I am through you in a twinkling.—(*Going to make a pass at Charles.*)

Charles. Keep your distance, my lord—I have arms.—(*Produces a pistol.*)—If you come a foot nearer, you have a brace of balls through your lordship's head.

Lord T. How? what's this? pistols!

Charles. At your lordship's service.—Sword and pistol, my lord.—Those, you know, are our weapons. If this misses, I have the fellow to it in my pocket.—Don't be frightened, madam; his lordship has removed your friends and relations, but he will take great care of you. Shall I leave you with him?

Har. Cruel Charles! you know I must go with you now.

Charles. A little way from the door, if your lordship pleases. (*Waves his hand.*)

Lord T. Sir!—'Sdeath!—Madam!—

Charles. A little more round, my lord.—(*Waves.*)

Lord T. But sir!—Mr. Oakly!

Charles. I have no leisure to talk with your lordship now. A little more that way, if you please.—(*Waves.*)—You know where I live. If you have any commands for Miss Russet, you will hear of her too at my house.—Nay, keep back, my lord.—(*Presents.*)

—Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant.—

[*Exit, with Harriot, R.H.*]

Lord T. (*Looks at them, and pauses for a short time.*)—I cut a mighty ridiculous figure here, 'pon honour.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Lady Freelove's House.*

Enter LORD TRINKET, LADY FREELOVE, with a letter, and CAPTAIN O'CUTTER, R.H.

Lord T. Was ever any thing so unfortunate! Plague on't, captain, how could you make such a strange blunder?

O'Cut. I never thought of a blunder. I was to deliver two letters; and if I gave them one a-piece, I thought it would do.

Lady F. And so, my lord, the ingenious captain gave the letter intended for me to young Oakly, and here has brought me a challenge.

Lord T. Ridiculous! Never was any thing so malapropos. Did you read the direction, captain?

O'Cut. Who—me? Devil burn me, not I—I never rade at all.

Lord T. 'Sdeath! how provoking! When I had secured the servants, and got all the people out of the way—when every thing was en train.

Lady F. Nay, never despair, my lord. I've hit upon a method to set every thing to rights again.

Lord T. How—how, my dear lady Freelove, how?

Lady F. Suppose, then, your lordship was to go and deliver these country gentlemen from their confinement; make them believe it was a plot of young Oak-

ly's, to carry off my niece ; and so make a merit of your own services with the father.

Lord T. Admirable ! I'll about it immediately.

O'Cut. Has your lordship any occasion for my service in this expedition ?

Lord T. O, no.—Only release me these people, and then keep out of the way, dear captain.

O'Cut. With all my heart, 'fâit. But you are all wrong :—this will not signify a brass farding. If you would let me alone, I would give him a salt cel, I warrant you. But, upon my credit, there's nothing to be done without a little tilting. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Lord T. But where shall I carry them, when I have delivered them ?

Lady F. To Mr. Oakly's, by all means ; you may be sure my niece is there.

Lord T. To Mr. Oakly's ! Why, does your ladyship consider ? 'Tis going directly in the fire of the enemy—throwing the dementi full in their teeth.

Lady F. So much the better. Face your enemies ; nay, you shall outface them too. I'll certainly meet you there. It's hard indeed, if two persons of condition can't bear themselves out against such trumpery folks as the family of the Oakly's.

Lord T. Odious, low people ! But I lose time—I must after the captain ; and so, till we meet at Mr. Oakly's, I kiss your ladyship's hands—you wont fail me ?

Lady F. You may depend on me.—[*Exit Lord Trinket, R.H.*].—So, here is fine work ! this artful little hussy has been too much for us all. Well, what's to be done ? Why, when a woman of fashion gets into a scrape, nothing but a fashionable assurance can get her out of it again. I'll e'en go boldly to Mr. Oakly's, as I have promised, and if it appears practicable, I will forward Lord Trinket's match ; but if I find that matters have taken another turn, his lordship must excuse me. In that case, I'll fairly drop him, seem a perfect stranger to all his intentions, and give my visit an air of congratulation to my niece, and any other husband

which fortune, her wise father, or her ridiculous self has provided for her. [*Exit*, L.H.

SCENE II.—*Mrs. Oakly's Dressing-room.*

MRS. OAKLY *discovered.*

Mrs. O. This is worse and worse! He never held me so much in contempt before—To go out without speaking to me, or taking the least notice. I am obliged to the major for this. How could he take him out! and how could Mr. Oakly go with him!—

Enter TOILET, L.H.

Well, Toilet.

Toil. My master is not come back yet, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone?

Toil. I don't know, I can assure your ladyship.

Mrs. O. Why don't you know? You know nothing.—But I warrant you know well enough, if you would tell. You shall never persuade me but you knew of Mr. Oakly's going out to-day.

Toil. I wish I may die, ma'am, upon my honour, and I protest to your ladyship, I knew nothing in the world of the matter, no more than the child unborn. There is Mr. Paris, my master's gentleman, knows—

Mrs. O. What does he know?

Toil. That I knew nothing at all of the matter.

Mrs. O. Where is Paris? What is he doing?

Toil. He is in my master's room, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Bid him come here.

Toil. Yes, ma'am.

[*Exit*, L.H.

Mrs. O. He is certainly gone after this young flirt. His confidence and the major's insolence provoke me beyond expression.

Re-enter TOILET with PARIS, L.H.

Where's your master?

Par. Il est sorti. He is gone out.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone?

Par. Ah, madame, je n'en sçai rien. I know nothing of it.

Mrs. O. Nobody knows any thing. Why did not you tell me he was going out?

Par. I dress him—Je ne m'en soucie pas du plus—He go where he will—I have no business with it.

Mrs. O. Yes, you should have told me—that was your business—and if you don't mind your business better, you sha'n't stay here, I can tell you, sir.

Par. Voila! quelque chose d'extraordinaire?

Mrs. O. Don't stand jabbering and shrugging your shoulders, but go and inquire—go—and bring me word where he is gone!

Par. I don't know what I am do.

Mrs. O. Bid John come to me.

Par. De tout mon cœur. Jean—ici—Jean! speak my lady. [Exit, L.H.]

Mrs. O. Impudent fellow! His insolent gravity and indifference is insupportable.—Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Where's John? Why don't he come? Why do you stand with your hands before you? Why don't you fetch him?

Toil. Yes, ma'am, I'll go this minute. O—here, John—my lady wants you.

Enter JOHN, L.H.

Mrs. O. Where's your master?

John. Gone out, madam.

Mrs. O. Why did not you go with him?

John. Because he went out in the major's chariot, madam.

Mrs. O. Where did they go to?

John. To the major's, I suppose, madam.

Mrs. O. Suppose! Don't you know?

John. I believe so, but can't tell for certain, indeed, madam.

Mrs. O. Believe and suppose—and don't know, and can't tell! You are all fools! Go about your business.—(*John going.*)—Come here!—(*Returns.*)—Go to the major's—no—it does not signify—go along!—(*John going.*)—Yes, harkye,—(*Returns.*)—go to the major's, and see if your master is there.

John. Give your compliments, madam?

Mrs. O. My compliments, blockhead! Get along.—(*John going.*)—Come hither!—(*Returns.*)—Can't you go to the major's, and bring me word if Mr. Oakly is there, without taking any further notice?

John. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Well, why don't you go, then? And make haste back—and, d'ye hear, John?—(*John going, returns.*)

John. Madam!

Mrs. O. Nothing at all—go along.—(*John goes.*)—How uneasy Mr. Oakly makes me!—Harkye, John!—(*John returns.*)

John. Madam!

Mrs. O. Send the porter here.

John. Yes, madam. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Toil. So, she's in a rare humour! I shall have a fine time on't.—(*Aside.*)—Will your ladyship choose to dress?

Mrs. O. Pr'ythee, creature, don't tease me with your fiddle-faddle stuff—I have a thousand things to think of. Where is the porter? why has not that booby sent him? What is the meaning—

Re-enter JOHN, L.H.

John. Madam, my master is this moment returned, with Major Oakly, and my young master, and the lady that was here yesterday.

Mrs. O. Very well.—[*Exit John, L.H.*]—Returned—yes, truly, he is returned, and in a very extraordinary manner. This is setting me at open defiance. But I'll go down, and show them I have too much spirit to endure such usage.—(*Going.*)—Or, stay—I'll not go amongst his company—I'll go out.—Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Order the coach; I'll go out.—(*Toilet going.*)—*Toilet*, stay—I'll e'en go down to them.—*No—Toilet!*

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Order me a boiled chicken—I'll not go down to dinner—I'll dine in my own room, and sup there—I'll not see his face these three days.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

Enter OAKLY, MAJOR OAKLY, CHARLES, and HARRIOT, L.H.

Charles. My dear Harriot, do not make yourself so uneasy.

Har. Alas! I have too much cause for my uneasiness. Who knows what that vile lord has done with my father!

Oak. Be comforted, madam; we shall soon hear of Mr. Russet, and all will be well, I dare say.

Har. You are too good to me, sir; I shall never forgive myself for having disturbed the peace of such a worthy family.

Maj. O. Don't mind that, madam; they'll be very good friends again. This is nothing among married people. 'Sdeath, here she is!—*No—it's only Mrs. Toilet.*

Re-enter TOILET, R.H.

Oak. Well, *Toilet*, what now!—(*Toilet whispers him.*)—Not well? Can't come down to dinner? Wants to see me above?—*Harkye*, brother, what shall I do?

Maj. O. If you go, you are undone.

Har. Go, sir, go to Mrs. Oakly; indeed you had better.

Maj. O. 'Sdeath, brother, don't budge a foot. This is all fractiousness and ill-humour.

Oak. No, I'll not go. Tell her I have company, and we shall be glad to see her here. [*Exit Toil.* R.H.]

Maj. O. That's right.

Oak. Suppose I go and watch how she proceeds?

Maj. O. What d'ye mean! You would not go to her? Are you mad?

Oak. By no means go to her—I only want to know how she takes it. I'll lie perdu in my study, and observe her motions.

Maj. O. I don't like this pitiful ambuscade work—this bush-fighting. Why can't you stay here?—Ay, ay! I know how it will be. She'll come bounce in upon you with a torrent of anger and passion, or, if necessary, a whole flood of tears, and carry all before her at once.

Oak. You shall find that you are mistaken, major. Now I am convinced I'm in the right, I'll support that right, with ten times your steadiness.

Maj. O. You talk this well, brother.

Oak. I'll do it well, brother.

Maj. O. If you don't, you are undone.

Oak. Never fear, never fear. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Maj. O. Well, Charles.

Charles. I can't bear to see my Harriot so uneasy—I'll go immediately in quest of Mr. Russet. Perhaps I may learn at the inn where his lordship's ruffians have carried him.

Rus. (Without, L.H.) Here! Yes, yes, I know she's here well enough. Come along, Sir Harry, come along.

Har. He's here! My father; I know his voice.—Where is Mr. Oakly? O, now, good sir,—(*To the Major.*)—do but pacify him, and you'll be a friend indeed.

Enter RUSSET, LORD TRINKET, and SIR HARRY BEAGLE, L.H.

Lord T. There, sir—I told you it was so!

Rus. Ay, ay, it is too plain. O you provoking slut! Elopement after elopement!—And at last to have your father carried off by violence!—to endanger my life!

Zounds! I am so angry I dare not trust myself within reach of you.

Charles. I can assure you, sir, that your daughter is entirely—

Rus. You assure me! You are the fellow that has perverted her mind—that has set my own child against me—

Charles. If you will but hear me, sir—

Rus. I wont hear a word you say. I'll have my daughter—I wont hear a word.

Maj. O. Nay, Mr. Russet, hear reason. If you will but have patience—

Rus. I'll have no patience, I'll have my daughter, and she shall marry Sir Harry to-night.

Lord T. That is dealing rather too much en cavalier with me, Mr. Russet, 'pon honour. You take no notice of my pretensions, though my rank and family—

Rus. What care I for rank and family? I don't want to make my daughter a rantipole woman of quality. I'll give her to whom I please. Take her away, Sir Harry; she shall marry you to-night.

Maj. O. Only three words, Mr. Russet—

Rus. Why don't the booby take her?

Sir H. Hold hard! Hold hard! You are all on a wrong scent. Hold hard! I say, hold hard!—Hark-ye, 'Squire Russet.

Rus. Well, what now?

Sir H. It was proposed, you know, to match me with Miss Harriot—But she can't take kindly to me.—When one has made a bad bet, it is best to hedge off, you know—and so I have e'en swapped her with Lord Trinket here, for his brown horse, Nabob.

Rus. Swapped her! Swapped my daughter for a horse! Zounds, sir, what d'ye mean?

Sir H. Mean? Why I mean to be off, to be sure—it wont do—I tell you it wont do.—First of all I knocked up myself and my horses, when they took for London—and now I have been stewed aboard a tender—I have wasted three stone at least—If I could have

rid my match it would not have grieved me—And so as I said before, I have swapped her for Nabob.

Rus. The devil take Nabob, and yourself, and Lord Trinket, and—

Lord T. Pardon ! je vous demande pardon, Monsieur Russet, 'pon honour.

Rus. Death and the devil ! I shall go distracted ! My daughter plotting against me—the—

Maj. O. Come, come, Mr. Russet, I am your man after all. Give me but a moment's hearing, and I'll engage to make peace between you and your daughter, and throw the blame where it ought to fall most deservedly.

Sir H. Ay, ay, that's right. Put the saddle on the right horse, my buck !

Rus. Well, sir—What d'ye say?—Speak—I don't know what to do.

Maj. O. I'll speak the truth, let who will be offended by it.—I have proof presumptive and positive for you, Mr. Russet. From his lordship's behaviour a Lady Freelove's, when my nephew rescued her, we may fairly conclude that he would stick at no measure to carry his point—there's proof presumptive.—But sir, we can give you proof positive too—proof under his lordship's own hand, that he likewise was the contriver of the gross affront that has just been offered you

Rus. Hey ! how ?

Lord T. Every syllable romance, 'pon honour.

Maj. O. Gospel, every word on't.

Charles. This letter will convince you, sir. In consequence of what happened at Lady Freelove's his lordship thought fit to send me a challenge ; but the messenger blundered, and gave me this letter instead of it.—(*Giving the letter.*)—I have the case which enclosed it in my pocket.

Lord T. Forgery from beginning to end, 'pon honour.

Maj. O. Truth, upon my honour.—But read, read Mr. Russet, read, and be convinced.

Rus. Let me see—let me see—(*Reads.*)—Um—um—um—um—so, so—um—um—um—damnation!—*Wish me success—obedient slave*—TRINKET.—Fire and fury! How dare you do this?

Lord T. When you are cool, Mr. Russet, I will explain this matter to you.

Rus. Cool! 'Sdeath and hell! I'll never be cool again—I'll be revenged—So my Harriot, my dear girl, is innocent at last. Say so, my Harriot: tell me you are innocent. (*Embraces, &c.*)

Har. I am indeed, sir, and happy beyond expression at your being convinced of it.

Rus. I am glad on't—I am glad on't—I believe you, Harriot!—You was always a good girl.

Maj. O. So she is, an excellent girl!—Worth a regiment of such lords and baronets—Come, sir, finish every thing handsomely at once.—Come, Charles will have a handsome fortune.

Rus. Marry!—she durst not do it.

Maj. O. Consider, sir, they have long been fond of each other—old acquaintance—faithful lovers—turtles—and may be very happy.

Rus. Well, well—since things are so—I love my girl. Harkye, young Oakly, if you don't make her a good husband, you'll break my heart, you rogue.

Maj. O. I'll cut his throat if he don't.

Charles. Do not doubt it, sir! my Harriot has reformed me altogether.

Rus. Has she?—Why then—there, heaven bless you both—there—now there's an end on't.

Sir H. So, my lord, you and I are both distanced—A hollow thing, damme.

Lord T. N^oimporte.

Sir H. Now this stake is drawn, my lord may be for hedging off, mayhap. Ecod! I'll go to Jack Speed's, secure Nabob, and be out of town in an hour.

[*Aside and exit, L.H.*

Enter LADY FREELOVE, L.H.

Lady F. My dear Miss Russet, you'll excuse—

Charles. Mrs. Oakly, at your ladyship's service.

Lady F. Married?

Har. Not yet, madam; but my father has been so good as to give his consent.

Lady F. I protest I am prodigiously glad of it. My dear, I give you joy—and you, Mr. Oakly.—I wish you joy, Mr. Russet, and all the good company—for I think the most of them are parties concerned.

Maj. O. How easy, impudent, and familiar!

(*Aside.*)

Lady F. Lord Trinket here too! I vow I did not see your lordship before.

Lord T. Your ladyship's most obedient slave.

(*Bowing.*)

Lady F. You seem grave, my lord! Come, come, I know there has been some difference between you and Mr. Oakly—You must give me leave to be a mediator in this affair.

Lord T. Here has been a small fracas, to be sure, madam! We are all blown, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Blown! what do you mean, my lord?

Lord T. Nay, your ladyship knows that I never mind these things, and I know that they never discompose your ladyship—But things have happened a little en travers—The little billet I sent your ladyship has fallen into the hands of that gentleman—(*Pointing to Charles.*)—and so there has been a little brouillerie about it—that's all.

Lady F. You talk to me, my lord, in a very extraordinary style—If you have been guilty of any misbehaviour, I am sorry for it; but your ill conduct can fasten no imputation on me.—Miss Russet will justify me sufficiently.

Maj. O. Had not your ladyship better appeal to my friend Charles here?—The letter, Charles!—Out with it this instant!

Charles. Yes, I have the credentials of her ladyship's integrity in my pocket.—Mr. Russet, the letter you read a little while ago was enclosed in this cover, which also I now think it my duty to put into your hands.

Rus. (Reading.) To the Right Honourable Lady Freelove—'Sdeath and hell!—and now I recollect, the letter itself was pieced with scraps of French, and madam, and your ladyship—Fire and fury! madam, how came you to use me so? I am obliged to you, then, for the insult that has been offered me!

Lady F. What is all this? Your obligations to me, Mr. Russet, are of a nature, that—

Rus. Fine obligations! I dare say, I am partly obliged to you too for the attempt on my daughter, by that thing of a lord yonder, at your house. Zounds, madam! these are injuries never to be forgotten—They are the grossest affronts to me and my family—All the world shall know them—Zounds!—I'll—

Lady F. Mercy on me! how boisterous are these country gentlemen! Why, really, Mr. Russet; you rave like a man in Bedlam—I am afraid you'll beat me—and then you swear most abominably.—How can you be so vulgar?—I see the meaning of this low malice—But the reputations of women of quality are not so easily impeached—My rank places me above the scandal of little people, and I shall meet such petty insolence with the greatest ease and tranquility. But you and your simple girl will be the sufferers.—I had some thoughts of introducing her into the first company—But now, madam, I shall neither receive nor return your visits, and will entirely withdraw my protection from the ordinary part of the family. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Rus. Zounds, what impudence! that's worse than all the rest.

Lord T. Fine presence of mind, faith!—The true French nonchalance—But, good folks, why such a deal of rout and tapage about nothing at all?—If Mademoiselle Harriot had rather be Mrs. Oakly than Lady Trinket—Why—I wish her joy—that's all—Mr. Rus-

set, I wish you joy of your son-in-law—Mr. Oakly, I wish you joy of the lady—and you, madam,—(*To Harriot.*)—of the gentleman—And, in short, I wish you all joy of one another, 'pon honour. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Rus. There's a fine fellow of a lord now! The devil's in your London folks of the first fashion, as you call them. They will rob you of your estate, debauch your daughter, or lie with your wife—and all as if they were doing you a favour—'pon honour!—

Maj. O. Hey! what now! (*Bell rings violently.*)

Re-enter OAKLY, R.H.

Oak. D'ye hear, major, d'ye hear?

Maj. O. Zounds! what a clatter!—She'll pull down all the bells in the house.

Oak. My observations since I left you have confirmed my resolution. I see plainly that her good humour, and her ill humour, her smiles, her tears, and her fits, are all calculated to play upon me.

Maj. O. Did not I always tell you so? It's the way with them all—they will be rough and smooth, and hot and cold, and all in a breath. Any thing to get the better of us.

Oak. She is in all moods at present, I promise you.—There has she been in her chamber, fuming and fretting, and dispatching a messenger to me every two minutes—servant after servant—now she insists on my coming to her—now again she writes a note to entreat—then Toilet is sent to let me know that she is ill, absolutely dying—then the very next minute, she'll never see my face again—she'll go out of the house directly. (*Bell rings.*)—Again! now the storm rises!

Maj. O. It will soon drive this way then—now, brother, prove yourself a man.—You have gone too far to retreat.

Oak. Retreat!—Retreat!—No, no!—I'll preserve the advantage I have gained, I am determined.

Maj. O. Ay, ay!—keep your ground!—fear nothing

—up with your noble heart ! Good discipline makes good soldiers ; stick close to my advice, and you may stand buff to a tigress

Oak. Here she is, by heavens ! now, brother !

Maj. O. And now, brother !—Now or never !

Re-enter MRS. OAKLY, R.H.

Mrs. O. I think, Mr. Oakly, you might have had humanity enough to have come to see how I did. You have taken your leave, I suppose, of all tenderness and affection—but I'll be calm—I'll not throw myself into a passion—you want to drive me out of your house—I see what you aim at, and will be beforehand with you—let me keep my temper ! I'll send for a chair, and leave the house this instant.

Oak. True, my love : I knew you would not think of dining in your chamber alone, when I had company below. You shall sit at the head of the table, as you ought, to be sure, as you say, and make my friends welcome.

Mrs. O. Excellent raillery ! Lookye, Mr. Oakly, I see the meaning of all this affected coolness and indifference.

Oak. My dear, consider where you are—

Mrs. O. You would be glad, I find, to get me out of your house, and have all your flirts about you.

Oak. Before all this company ! Fie !

Mrs. O. But I'll disappoint you, for I shall remain in it, to support my due authority—as for you, Major Oakly—

Maj. O. Hey-day ! What have I done ?

Mrs. O. I think you might find better employment, than to create divisions between married people—and you, sir !

Oak. Nay but, my dear !—

Mrs. O. Might have more sense, as well as tenderness, than to give ear to such idle stuff.

Oak. Lord, Lord !

Mrs. O. You and your wise counsellor there, I suppose, think to carry all your points with me—

Oak. Was ever any thing—

Mrs. O. But it wont do, sir. You shall find that I will have my own way, and that I will govern my own family.

Oak. You had better learn to govern yourself, by half. Your passion makes you ridiculous. Did ever any body see so much fury and violence; affronting your best friends, breaking my peace, and disconcerting your own temper! And all for what? For nothing. 'Sdeath, madam! at these years, you ought to know better.

Mrs. O. At these years!—Very fine!—Am I to be talked to in this manner?

Oak. Talked to!—Why not?—You have talked to me long enough—almost talked me to death—and I have taken it all, in hopes of making you quiet—but all in vain. Patience, I find, is all thrown away upon you; and henceforward, come what may, I am resolved to be master of my own house.

Mrs. O. So, so!—Master indeed!—Yes, sir; and you'll take care to have mistresses enough too, I warrant you.

Oak. Perhaps I may; but they shall be quiet ones, I can assure you.

Mrs. O. Indeed!—And do you think I am such a tame fool, as to sit quietly and bear all this? You shall know, sir, that I will resent this behaviour—you shall find that I have a spirit—

Oak. Of the devil.

Mrs. O. Intolerable!—you shall find then that I will exert that spirit. I am sure I have need of it. As soon as the house is once cleared again, I'll shut my doors against all company.—You sha'n't see a single soul for this month.

Oak. 'Sdeath, madam, but I will!—I'll keep open house for a year.—I'll send cards to the whole town—Mr. Oakly's rout!—All the world will come—and I'll go among the world too—I'll be mewed up no longer.

Mrs. O. Provoking insolence! This is not to be endured—Lookye, Mr. Oakly—

Oak. And lookye, Mrs. Oakly, I will have my own way.

Mrs. O. Nay, then, let me tell you, sir—

Oak. And let me tell you, madam, I will not be crossed—I wont be made a fool.

Mrs. O. Why, you wont let me speak.

Oak. Because you don't speak as you ought. Madam, madam! you sha'n't look, nor walk, nor talk, nor think, but as I please.

Mrs. O. Was there ever such a monster! I can bear this no longer.—(*Bursts into tears.*)—O you vile man! I can see through your design—you cruel, barbarous, inhuman—such usage to your poor wife!—you'll be the death of her.

Oak. She sha'n't be the death of me, I am determined.

Mrs. O. That it should ever come to this!—To be contradicted—(*Sobbing.*)—insulted—abused—hated, it is too much—my heart will burst with—oh—oh!—(*Falls into a fit.*—*Harriot, Charles, &c. run to her assistance.*)

Oak. (*Interposing.*) Let her alone.

Har. Sir, Mrs. Oakly—

Charles. For heaven's sake, sir, she will be—

Oak. Let her alone—let her alone.

Har. Pray, my dear sir, let us assist her. She may—

Oak. I don't care—Let her alone, I say.

Mrs. O. (*Rising.*) O, you monster!—you villain!—you base man!—Would you let me die for want of help?—would you—

Oak. Bless me! madam, your fit is very violent—take care of yourself.

Mrs. O. Despised, ridiculed—but I'll be revenged—you shall see, sir—

Oak. Tol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol-de-rol-lol. (*Singing.*)

Mrs. O. What, am I made a jest of! Exposed to all the world! If there's law or justice—

Oak. Tol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol-de-rol-lol. (*Singing.*)

Mrs. O. I shall burst with anger. Have a care, sir; you may repent this. Scorned and made ridiculous! No power on earth shall hinder my revenge! (*Going.*)

Har. (*Interposing.*) Stay, madam.

Mrs. O. Let me go—I cannot bear this place!

Har. Let me beseech you, madam.

Maj. O. Courage, brother—you have done wonders! (*Apart.*)

Oak. I think she'll have no more fits. (*Apart.*)

Har. Stay, madam—pray stay but one moment.—I have been a painful witness of your uneasiness, and in great part the innocent occasion of it. Give me leave then—

Mrs. O. I did not expect, indeed, to have found you here again. But however—

Har. I see the agitation of your mind, and it makes me miserable. Suffer me to tell the real truth—I can explain every thing to your satisfaction.

Mrs. O. May be so—I cannot argue with you.

Charles. Pray, madam, hear her, for my sake, for your own, dear madam!

Mrs. O. Well, well—proceed.

Har. I understand, madam, that your first alarm was occasioned by a letter from my father to your nephew.

Rus. I was in a swinging passion, to be sure, madam! The letter was not over civil, I believe—I did not know but the young rogue had ruined my girl. But it's all over now, and so—

Mrs. O. You was here yesterday, sir?

Rus. Yes, I came after Harriot. I thought I should find my young madam with my young sir, here.

Mrs. O. with Charles, did you say, sir?

Rus. Ay, With Charles, madam. The young rogue has been fond of her a long time, and she of him, it seems.

Mrs. O. I fear I have been to blame. (*Aside.*)

Rus. I ask pardon, madam, for the disturbance I made in your house.

Har. And the abrupt manner in which I came into

it demands a thousand apologies. But the occasion must be my excuse.

Mrs. O. How have I been mistaken!—(*Aside.*)—But did not I overhear you and Mr. Oakly—(*To Harriot.*)

Har. Dear madam, you had but a partial hearing of our conversation. It related entirely to this gentleman.

Charles. To put it beyond doubt, madam, Mr. Russet and my guardian have consented to our marriage; and we are in hopes that you will not withhold your approbation.

Mrs. O. I have no further doubt—I see you are innocent, and it was cruel to suspect you. You have taken a load of anguish off my mind—and yet your kind interposition comes too late; Mr. Oakly's love for me is entirely destroyed. (*Weeping.*)

Oak. I must go to her! (*Apart.*)

Maj. O. Not yet—not yet! (*Apart.*)

Har. Do not disturb yourself with such apprehensions; I am sure Mr. Oakly loves you most affectionately

Oak. I can hold no longer.—(*Going to her.*)—My affection for you, madam, is as warm as ever. My constrained behaviour has cut me to the soul—for it was all constrained—and it was with the utmost difficulty that I was able to support it.

Mrs. O. O, Mr. Oakly, how have I exposed myself! What low arts has my jealousy induced me to perform! I see my folly, and fear that you can never forgive me.

Oak. Forgive you! This change transpires, by Brother—Mr. Russet—Charles—Harriot. Did I not tell you I would cure you of your jealousy—

Maj. O. Joy, much joy to you!—You are at liberty to the bye, you are not a little obliged to me. I have been somewhat not I tell you I would cure you of your jealousy—

mily? I beg pardon, sister, your physician. I prescribe for you. My rough, I believe, has no effect, and so don't

Mrs. O. I am indeed obliged to you, and I feel—

Oak. Nay, my dear, no more of this. All that's past must be utterly forgotten.

Mrs. O. I have not merited this kindness, but it shall hereafter be my study to deserve it. Away with all idle jealousies! And since my suspicions have hitherto been groundless, I am resolved for the future never to suspect at all.

Disposition of the characters when the Curtain falls

